the weekly Standard

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WAR POLITICS

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The Case for American Empire

by Max Boot

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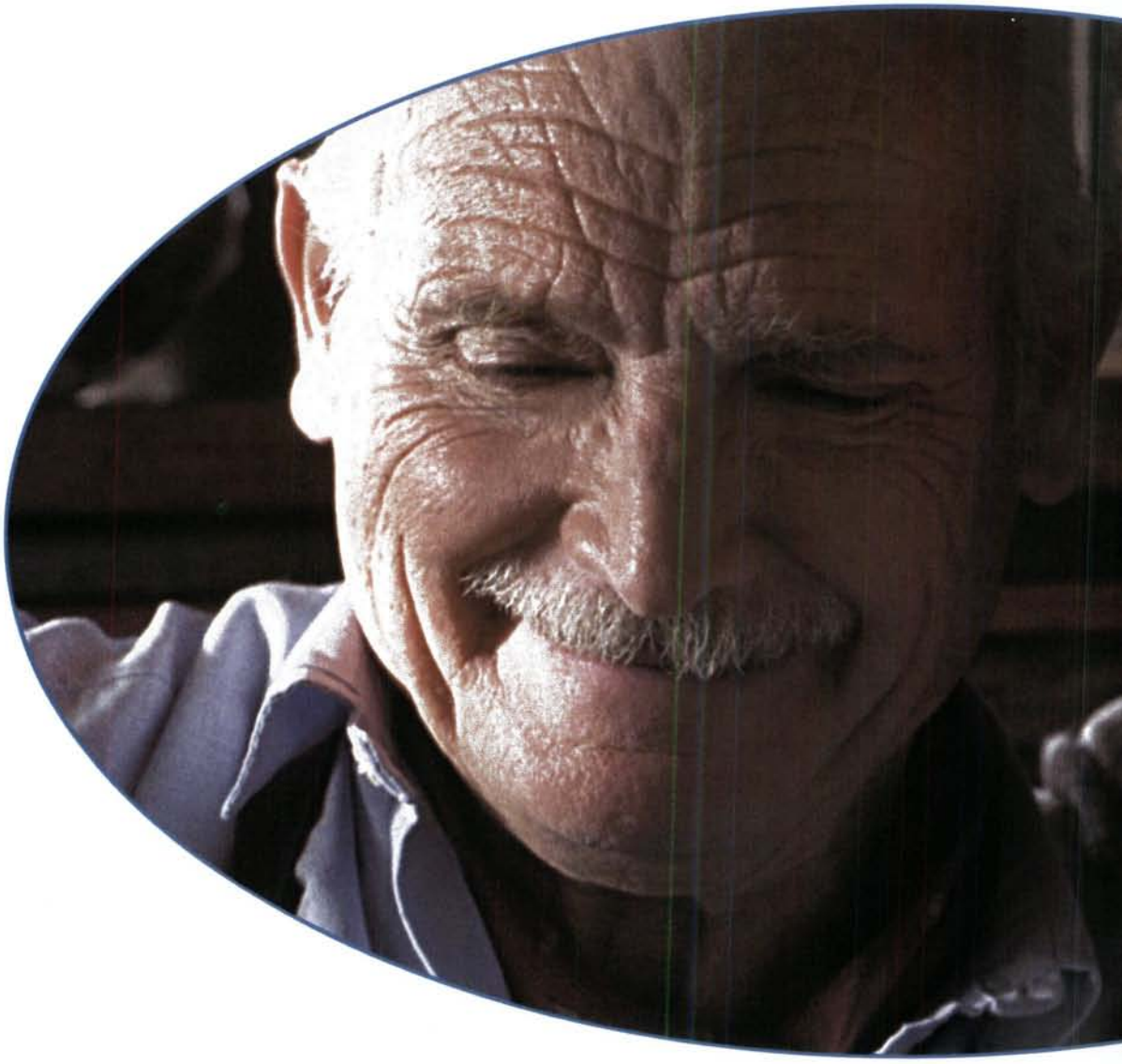

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"This is the world's fight."

-President George W. Bush, September 20, 2001 Address to Joint Session of Congress

Terrorism knows no boundaries. Over 80 nations lost innocent civilians in the September 11 attacks. Terrorism can strike anytime in any nation, and therefore all nations must work together to defeat it. They are doing that at the United Nations.

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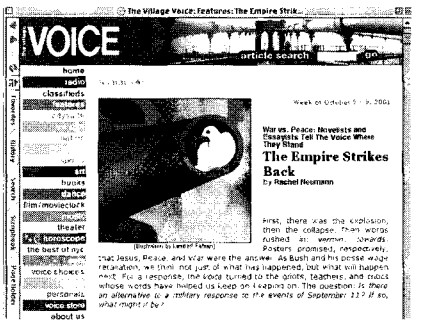
Chattering Asses, *Village Voice* Edition

THE SCRAPBOOK is indebted to Rachel Neumann of the *Village Voice*, who has done all our heavy lifting for us this week. She organized the lefty tabloid's symposium on the question "Is there an alternative to a military response to the events of September 11?"

For authoritative commentary on that question, the *Voice* turned to a well-known repository of expertise—"novelists and essayists." With a few exceptions (Christopher "no compromise with theocratic fascism" Hitchens; Ellen "mass murder can't be allowed to go unpunished" Willis; and Paul "we had better defend ourselves" Berman, notably), the *Voice*'s "griots, teachers, and critics" did not acquit themselves honorably. In a smorgasbord of the awful, these stood out:

THICH NHAT HANH, BUDDHIST MONK AND AUTHOR OF *Anger*: Face what you think is the cause of your suffering and say: I know you must have suffered a lot in order to have done such a thing to us. Have we contributed to your suffering? If you say this sincerely, it is not a lack of courage but a courageous act.

BARBARA EHRENREICH, AUTHOR OF *Nickel and Dimed*: I don't know how you wage war against one person; it doesn't make sense. I can imagine a commando-type raid to capture bin Laden, then a trial, with evidence, before the World Court. But that would not address the vast global inequalities in which terrorism is ultimately rooted. What is so heartbreaking to me as a feminist is that the strongest response to corporate globalization and U.S. military domination is based on such a violent and misogynist ideology.



SUHEIR HAMMAD, POET: Before any military action is ever taken anywhere, all citizens of the world will recite the pledge below:

Me, I pledge my allegiance / to the love of all of humanity / and to the aspirations we all share / one species / one blood / one love / one destiny / one love / one destiny / under all manifestations of god / indivisible / with liberty and / medicine and shelter and / food and self-determination and freedom of religion and freedom of expression and freedom of movement and love and justice / for all.

VIVIAN GORNICK, AUTHOR OF *The Situation and the Story*: A military strike? Where? What? When? Above all, against whom? If you hit them in Iraq, they'll re-group in Libya. If you squash them in Libya, they'll rise up in Afghanistan. They have struck us, and in their strike announced: We'd rather die—and take you with us—than go on living in the world you have forced us to occupy. Force will get us nowhere. It is reparations that are owing, not retribution.

DAVID BARSAMIAN, AUTHOR OF *Decline and Fall of Public Broadcasting*: It seems there's a double-standard for "Islamic terrorists" who are being tried in public by a cowboy administration. The U.S. is harboring a Haitian death-squad leader, Emmanuel Constant. Should the Haitian air force bomb the U.S.?

Whew! What is so heartbreaking to me as THE SCRAPBOOK is the difficulty of meting out justice in such a target-rich environment, and with only a couple of pages at my disposal.

Should the Haitian air force be unleashed on the *Village Voice*? ♦

Mosque Meeting Update

Two weeks ago on this page, we outlined the past activities of several groups, each purporting to represent American Muslims, that were invited to a meeting with President Bush in a Washington, D.C., mosque. Our report was the subject of this back-and-forth at the Oct. 1 White House press briefing:

QUESTION: Was the president made aware before he visited the mosque that three of the organizations that met with him—the Council on American Islamic Relations, the Muslim Public Affairs Council, and the American Muslim Alliance—have, reports THE WEEKLY STANDARD, sponsored a speaker who announced that Jews are descended from apes, the Holocaust is denied, and a comparison of Palestinian suicide bombers to American Minutemen?...

MR. FLEISCHER: A similar question came up at Friday's briefing, as well, about some statements that reportedly were made by some of the people the president met with. And my reaction then is the exact same reaction now. You should never assume that when the president meets with a group for important reasons of meeting with a group that he would ever agree with anything anybody in that group has said. There are often times that the president can meet with people and not share their opinions.

QUESTION: He knew about this, Ari,

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these people, and what they've said, and met with them?

MR. FLEISCHER: As I indicated already, I'll say it again, when the president meets with groups, it's not an indication, of course, that he agrees with everything anybody may have said in that group.

Got that? We "should never assume" that the president of the United States agrees that the Holocaust is a myth simply because he meets with a group that says so. "There are often times that the president can meet with a group but not share their opinions"—you know, "for important reasons of meeting with a group."

We don't for a minute assume the president agrees with any of the ideas described above. We simply wonder if there are any ideas so repellent that someone who sympathizes with them won't be admitted to this White House. And if so, why doesn't Holocaust denial make the list? ♦

Life Imitates *The Onion*

The following reportage is taken from the Oct. 4, 2001, *San Francisco Chronicle*, not the satirical website *The Onion*:

"Las Vegas—Samantha remembers the killer settling into the crushed red velvet chair, staring blankly up at her while she undulated her hips inches from his face. . . . He didn't look evil, she said. . . . Certainly not like a man who would, just three months later, hijack a jet and smash it into the World Trade Center. . . . To the 29-year-old stripper, Marwan Al-Shehhi simply looked "cheap."

"Some big-man terrorist, huh?" Samantha said this week as she took a breather from the two-dozen lap dances she bestows daily. . . . "He spent about $20 for a quick dance and didn't tip more." She stopped and bit her lip, . . . "I'm glad he's dead with the rest of them, and I don't like feeling something like that," Samantha finally said. "But he wasn't just a bad tipper—he killed people." ♦

Clinton as Caligula

The most brilliant bit of the week from Andrew Sullivan's *andrewsullivan.com*, me-zine:

> In last Friday's *New York Times*, an anonymous close friend of Bill Clinton's reflected on the former president's mixed emotions after the WTC Massacre: "He has said there has to be a defining moment in a presidency that really makes a great presidency. He didn't have one." A reader points out how similar these feelings are to another character in history as captured by the Roman historian Suetonius: "He even used openly to deplore the state of his times, because they had been marked by no public disasters, saying that the rule of Augustus had been made famous by the Varus massacre, and that of Tiberius by the collapse of the amphitheatre at Fidenae, while his own was threatened with oblivion because of its prosperity, and every now and then he wished for the destruction of his armies, for famine, pestilence, fires, or a great earthquake." To whom was Suetonius referring? Caligula. ♦

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Casual

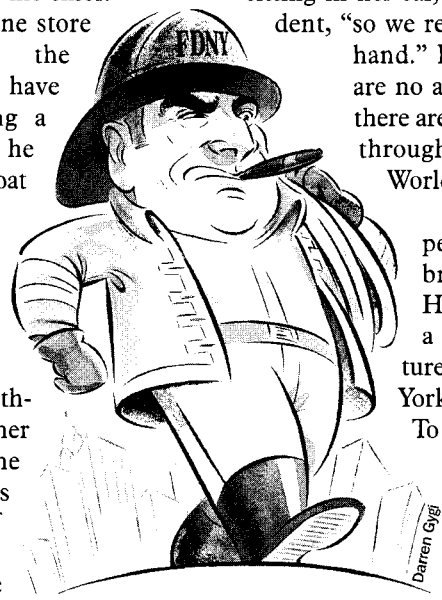
New York's Finest Hour

On a recent flight from London, back in the pre-September 11 era when a transatlantic trip meant an opportunity to relax and read, I took along a reprint of E.B. White's slim volume *Here is New York*, written in 1949. Delightful read, I thought, paying no particular attention to a passage I have since had occasion to recall:

> The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructible. A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers, crumble the bridges, turn the underground passages into lethal chambers, cremate the millions. The intimation of mortality is part of New York now; in the sounds of jets overhead, in the black headlines of the latest editions. . . . In the mind of whatever perverted dreamer might loose the lightning, New York must hold a steady, irresistible charm.

Somehow I didn't remember that prescient, half-century-old warning even when the World Trade Center succumbed to Islam's perverted dreamer. But it came to mind last week, when the New York Police Department took my wife, Cita, and me to visit ground zero. To say that television pictures don't capture the full extent of the horror is to understate the impact of the visit by orders of magnitude. The debris pile is still so hot—1,500 degrees—that when some chunk is removed, allowing oxygen to get in, it reignites. Bright orange body bags are located at scattered points, not so much because the sifters-through-the-ruins any longer hope to find bodies, but in the event that some body part is turned up. So great was the impact of the explosion that brought the buildings down that a huge chunk of the now-famous grillwork that was part of the twin towers is embedded in a building across the street. Stretchers are lined up, forlornly hoping for passengers able to benefit from medical care.

Everywhere, makeshift huts, tents, semi-destroyed storefronts are pressed into service. In one, Mass is available; in another, hot meals are dished out to what can no longer reasonably be called rescuers; in still another, cops and firemen slump in rickety chairs, reading the newspapers or staring dully at the smoking pile. Out of one store strides perhaps the tallest firefighter I have ever seen, puffing a huge cigar, which he says clears his throat better than any respirator—a bit of swagger that foretells a quick recovery for the city.



But there is another thing that neither television nor the print media has conveyed. Acts of heroism can be captured on the screen, but the calm dignity of the firefighters and cops needs to be experienced firsthand.

Police sergeant Richard Kimmler, who piloted us through the ruins, exemplifies their courtesy and toughness. "Yes, sir" and "Watch your step, ma'am" come as naturally to him as his authoritative manner—"I must ask you to turn your back if a body part is uncovered" or (this to a French-Canadian television crew) "You know the rules; any infraction and you are out of here." Spoken as softly as the statement that his next day off, his first in three weeks, will be spent at the funeral of a colleague. "There are just too many to attend them all."

Magnifying the sense of loss is the fact that cops and firemen tend to cluster in neighborhoods, usually suburbs with affordable houses and decent schools. They know each other; their sisters marry their friends' brothers; they barbecue together. When disaster strikes one, it affects dozens.

Perhaps most impressive were our conversations with cops and firemen who shall remain nameless in this composite recital of their views. They know instinctively that if you don't hit back, you will get hit again. Colin Powell presents the biggest danger to President Bush's policy of retaliation and all-out war on terrorism. Hillary Clinton doesn't really give a damn, sitting in her car, ignoring the president, "so we refused to shake her hand." It is said that there are no atheists in foxholes; there are no liberals digging through the ruins of the World Trade Center.

Nor are there any pessimists. Which brings me to Pete Hamill, a writer with a rare ability to capture the essence of New York and New Yorkers. To Hamill, Frank Sinatra epitomized all that makes New Yorkers what they are. Sinatra, writes Hamill, "defined success as a triumph over the odds." And, in a phrase that describes the men we met, from the bone-weary rescuers taking a quick break to the cigar-chomping firefighter swaggering to his next tour of duty, Hamill notes, "Sinatra . . . found a way to allow tenderness into the performance while remaining manly. . . . [He] created a new model for American masculinity." Whether they admit it or not, New York's firefighters and cops, one of whom hugged my wife when she broke down in tears, have retained their tenderness without sacrificing their masculinity.

Irwin M. Stelzer

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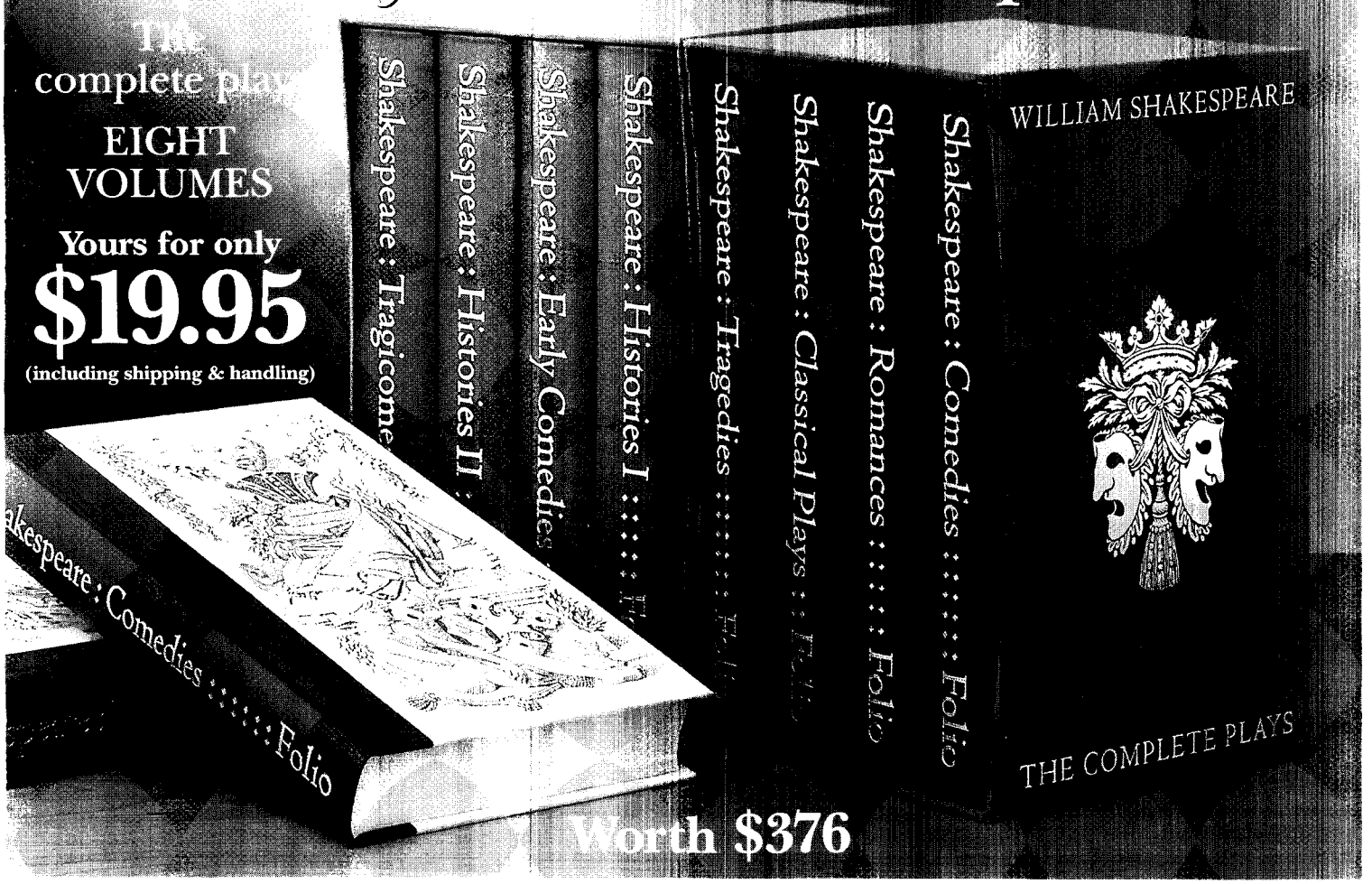

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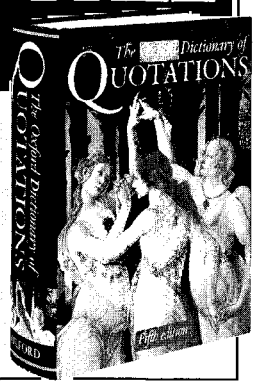

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A Just War

I usually enjoy J. Bottum's writing, but I'm troubled by his premature and ill-advised Christian-bashing article ("AWOL Christian Soldiers," Oct. 1). Bottum claims to know what was said and sung in most American churches following the attacks of September 11, but he refers only to Jerry Falwell and to one editorial.

With so little evidence to go on, Bottum is bound to miss the mark when he complains that "the entire theological tradition of using martial metaphors to describe God's glory has fallen into massive disrepute." This is certainly the case among the declining liberal mainline, but the tradition is alive and well in many circles, not the least of which are the flourishing Pentecostal and charismatic movements. While Bottum rightly reminds us of the "peace church" tradition, he is simply wrong when he concludes that the "soft pacifism" of post-World War II mainline Protestantism has replaced the Just War theory embraced by most Catholic, Orthodox, mainline Protestant, and evangelical American Christians. Polls show overwhelming support for American action to stop terrorism, and the numbers are largely unchanged by religious preference.

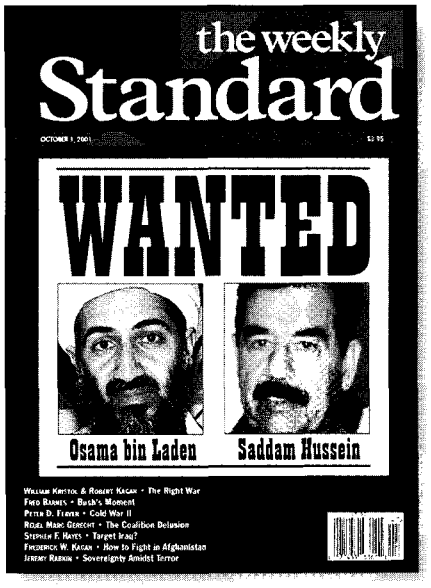
Bottum's facile criteria of proof-text scripture and selected hymns cannot adequately gauge most Christians' support for America's campaign to protect innocent lives and root out the evil that threatens them. The American belief in the possibility of a just war is deeper and broader than that, for it is rooted in the way American Christians worship, pray, and relate to other Christians and to those of other religions.

And the support of American Christians will last. Just War Christians are more likely to hang in there for the long haul than those without such theological convictions to motivate them. So Bottum goes over the top with his Neronian "blame the Christians" sentiment: "If the United States goes wobbly in its war on terrorism . . . Christian feeling will have had something to do with it." Indeed, if the United States prevails in its war on terrorism, the widespread Christian conviction that America must act to prevent the further loss of innocent lives will have had something to do with it. That, and the irreplaceable conviction that God has already defeated evil and will not allow it to prevail in our time.

Rev. Robert R. Redman Jr.
San Antonio, TX

Holy Politics

Reuel Marc Gerecht's focusing on Osama bin Laden and his followers' being holy warriors detracts attention from their main political motivation, which is to change U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East ("Bin Laden, Beware," Sept. 24). Along with the rest of the establishment media, Gerecht characterizes



them as irrational madmen. He also dismisses the United States' lopsided support of Israel as the core problem.

One has only to listen to John Miller's rare 1998 interview with Osama bin Laden to hear from the man himself. Bin Laden states, "The enmity between us and the Jews goes far back in time and is deep rooted. There is no question that war between the two of us is inevitable. For this reason it is not in the interest of Western governments to expose the interests of their people to all kinds of retaliation for almost nothing. It is hoped that people of those countries will initiate a positive move and force their governments not to act on behalf of other states and other sects." It is clear that bin Laden is attempting to change our foreign policy in the Middle East. This is not a "holy war." He wants the United States to leave the Middle East. Bin Laden went on to tell Miller: "We believe that this [Clinton] administration represents Israel inside America."

The American media should put aside their own opinions and start leveling with the American public.

Kevin Breay
Los Angeles, CA

Who's with Us?

I had the unfortunate experience of seeing exactly what Peter Feaver describes as "the knee-jerk anti-Americanism of much of Britain (and Europe's) intellectual and media elite" ("The Brits are All Right," Sept. 24).

On the BBC World Service Telecast on September 12, a gentleman representing the Islamic Front in London was interviewed. He spoke out of both sides of his mouth. He initially expressed regret about the World Trade Center terrorist bombings and then proceeded to blame U.S. foreign policy and support of Israel as the real culprit. No opposing view was aired.

The United States has the support of the British government and the British people during this difficult time. Britain lost some of its own during the tragedy. The views of the BBC and its anti-American and anti-Israeli demagogues do not represent the views of the fine citizens of the United Kingdom.

Thanks to The Weekly Standard and Peter Feaver for helping to set the record straight with regard to the bias of the British media.

Kenneth Porterfield
St. Petersburg, FL

Having lived in Europe for several years, I have some firsthand observations of what Peter Feaver reports, and I fully agree with his analysis. I would go even further in predicting an eventual distancing of their support. Reading the British media and watching the BBC over the last few days, I have heard continual commentary from their correspondents about whether or not George Bush is getting "wise counsel" from his "more

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measured" allies in Europe, and whether the United States will be "disproportionate" in its response. Further comments about the United States' not understanding the root causes of this terrorism make the condescension almost unbearable. All of this from the United Kingdom, our staunchest ally in Europe.

The commentary on the continent is even worse, and it will deteriorate more rapidly. Italian defense minister Antonio Martino said, "The term war is inappropriate," as though it is up to him to determine how the United States will classify and respond to the worst act of terror in its history.

We shouldn't plan on anything more than verbal and moral support from our European allies. To do so would unduly raise our expectations of what support we can count on, and ultimately distract our leaders and disappoint the American people when the coalition predictably fractures when the going gets really tough. For this war we need our leaders and citizens fully focused on the task at hand, not trying to hold together a half dozen European allies in a military effort we can fight ourselves.

Europe is a nice place to visit, and their leaders may mean well, but when it comes to the defense of the United States in a life and death struggle, I would prefer to leave that entirely to people I can count on. In this case that will not include the countries of Europe.

SCOTT FRANDSEN
Atlanta, GA

IT'S NOT GRAB-AND-GO

GARY SCHMITT and Tom Donnelly rightly assert that Osama bin Laden wants us out of the Middle East ("What Our Enemies Want," Sept. 24). He surely wants the United States out of Saudi Arabia. But Schmitt and Donnelly are wrong to imply that a campaign in Afghanistan will be an operation as simple as the one that grabbed Manuel Noriega in Panama a few years back.

Do they really believe that a country that more or less successfully fended off the British Raj for 130 years and the Russians for at least 10 years can be defeated or rendered powerless by a Panama-type expeditionary force?

If they believe that, then perhaps they should brush up on their British colonial history. I'm thinking specifically of the 1842 Khyber Pass massacre. And that defeat took place without Stinger and blow-pipe missiles, which the Afghans now have. Yes, the Brits came back, but they never really controlled the territory.

Ground war in Afghanistan may be necessary, but a Panama-style war and victory it will not be. Not even close.

CARL W. GOSS
Los Angeles, CA

HOPLOPHOBIA

PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE COINED the term "hoplophobia" to describe unreasonable fear of weapons. A textbook example of this syndrome is the statement by the Association of Flight Attendants' spokeswoman in Sam Dealey's "How Not to Fix Airport Security" (Sept. 24). She says her union rejects arming pilots against hijackers because "We don't need to make these situations more dangerous than they are."

The recent "situation" involved the death of every soul aboard four jet airliners plus thousands of victims on the ground, and the destruction of billions of dollars' worth of public and private real estate. It would be enlightening to hear this woman explain the mechanism by which handguns in the hands of responsible pilots could have made this situation any "more dangerous."

C.D. TAVARES
Morristown, AZ

LIVING WITH TERROR

I HAVE READ Charles Krauthammer's important and incisive article "Arafat's War" (Sept. 3) as reprinted in the *Jerusalem Post*. While I agree both with his analysis and his conclusions, I disagree with one part of the article, i.e., the one that says that "Israelis are afraid. They are afraid to send children to the mall. They are afraid to go to the movies. They are afraid to drive the open road. Even worse, they are demoralized . . . as the illusion that assuaging the Palestinians and granting them their own state would bring peace is shattered."

Contrary to the above, the vast majority of Israelis are actually determined to go on living their normal lives as if there were no Palestinian terror. Movie theaters in most of the country, though less so in Jerusalem, are crowded as usual, and so are the concert halls, the restaurants, and the cafes. A few weeks ago, tens of thousands from Israel and abroad participated in a folk-dancing festival in Galilee, and there are other examples. That most Israelis, except for the rapidly diminishing number of incorrigible "peaceniks," have lost any illusion as to Yasser Arafat's real intentions is a good thing—and as Clyde Haberman commented in the Sept. 2 *New York Times*: "Israeli citizens, while worried about terrorism, have hardened, swinging to the right."

We have definitely not lost hope, but we have shed the remaining fantasies of Oslo. Yasser Arafat made two basic miscalculations when he started his wave of terror and violence: He believed that the fortitude and unity of the Israeli public would weaken—and they have grown stronger. He thought that he would be able to bring upon Israel international pressure to go beyond even what former Prime Minister Barak had offered him at Camp David and Taba—and again he failed.

Unfortunately, though Arafat must by now understand that he cannot win—obviously not caring about the terrible price the Palestinian population is paying for his intifada—he may nevertheless continue spreading terror and bloodshed unless the international community makes it absolutely clear to him that neither the Palestinians nor he personally will reap any political dividends from his strategy of violence.

ZALMAN SHOVAL
Former ambassador to the United States
Tel Aviv, Israel

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the weekly Standard

The Coalition Trap

Can the United States win a war on terrorism while winking at some terrorists and cozying up to nations that support them? Can the United States effectively fight terrorism and reward terrorism at the same time? You shouldn't have to ponder those questions very long. The certain answer is no.

But the Bush administration isn't certain. In its effort to build the broadest possible coalition of nations in support of the narrow objective of destroying Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda terror network in Afghanistan, the administration now runs a real risk of making so many compromises with terrorists and their sponsors that the fundamental goals of President Bush's war on terrorism will be sacrificed.

Consider the compromises with terrorism the United States has already made. Under the secretary of state's direction, the Bush administration has been actively courting Iran. Now Iran has been the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism for over two decades. It supports the Hezbollah terror organization, with a long and bloody record of terrorist actions against Israelis and Americans. Whatever openings may come in Iran under the more moderate President Khatami, the men who hold real power in Tehran still sponsor terrorism as a key tool of Iranian foreign policy. And Khatami himself still supports Hezbollah. That is why, in the effort to woo Iran, the Bush administration has, incredibly, decided to soft-pedal any criticism of—let alone take any action against—Hezbollah. When the White House released the list of terrorist bank accounts it intended to freeze, accounts related to Hezbollah (among others) were absent. Can one plausibly claim to be fighting a war against terrorism if Hezbollah is off the target list?

There's more. This past week the Bush administration backed a mission to Iran by British foreign secretary Jack Straw. Among the messages Straw delivered to the Iranians was this: "I understand that one of the factors which helps breed terrorism is the anger which many people in this region feel at events over the years in Palestine." You may have thought that the only people who think the September 11 attack was related to lack of progress in the peace process were American college professors and European intellectuals. As the *New York Times*'s Thomas Friedman and others have pointed out, Osama bin Laden and his gang don't give a hoot about the peace process.

But now, amazingly, the Bush administration, driven by the secretary of state's coalition-building strategy, has linked the September 11 attack with the peace process. President Bush's declaration this past week that he favors a Palestinian state was designed to firm up wavering Arab support, such as it is, for the war on terrorism. We doubt it will have much effect on Arab leaders, who are with us or against us for reasons largely unrelated to the peace process. It certainly will have no effect on the Iranians, as Jack Straw learned when the Iranians rebuffed his overture.

But let's assume that the message was really designed to appease the so-called "Arab street." Will it? No. In fact, it will have the opposite effect. Just think for a moment about the message the president, at the secretary of state's direction, was really (if inadvertently) sending: Terrorism works. Prior to September 11, Bush had said not a word about a Palestinian state. After September 11, he was declaring it his vision. To the Arabs and Palestinians who danced and cheered as the twin towers fell, Bush's statement told them they were right to celebrate. Kill enough Americans, and the Americans give ground. Bush's statement last week was thus not a blow against terrorism. It was a reward for terrorism. It tends to make bin Laden a hero to the Arab masses, and it will teach a generation of radical Arabs that progress in the war against Israel and the West can be achieved through the killing of Americans.

How could the president have blundered in this way? We fear that his understandable admiration for Secretary of State Powell, the man, has clouded his judgment about Powell the strategist. But Powell has made bad strategic judgments before, the most egregious being his well-documented effort to avoid going to war against Iraq in 1990, and his insistence on leaving Saddam Hussein in power in 1991. Then, too, Powell was preoccupied with coalitions, resistant to the use of American military might, and hostile to regime change. Of course then, Americans had not been attacked. Now that they have, our most basic strategic imperatives should be obvious: We must severely punish the aggression against America, and we must either deter or destroy other enemies considering or planning such acts. Moral clarity is indispensable to the strategic clarity needed to pursue a successful war against terrorism of the sort the president outlined.

This does not mean allies, diplomacy, and deal-making are unimportant. Quite the contrary. They are crucial to an overall strategy for fighting terrorism. But for the secretary

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of state, the coalition has now become the strategy. And so, in pursuit of the coalition, we have averted our eyes from Iranian-backed terrorism. In pursuit of the coalition, we have allowed our Arab allies to conclude that we will not target Iraq, even though Saddam Hussein's development of weapons of mass destruction may soon pose an even greater threat than bin Laden. In pursuit of the coalition, we have encouraged Palestinians and Arab radicals to believe that terrorism works.

It does not have to be this way. For one thing, who can imagine that this form of appeasement really buys the United States anything? Saudi Arabia appears every bit as ambivalent about letting the United States use Saudi bases to launch attacks on the Taliban as it did before Bush proffered his commitment to a Palestinian state. Iran will do nothing to aid the United States against bin Laden and the Taliban, except what it perceives to be in its own interest. Saddam Hussein will not reward American reticence with anything but savagery, as soon as he has an opportunity. In short, there is no evidence that Powell's compromises have bought us anything we could not have gained without them.

What's more, the United States has coalition partners whose allegiance does not require us to embrace terrorism in order to fight terrorism. Our strongest and most reliable partners are of course in Europe. Ironically, the Bush administration has been far less assiduous in courting our European allies than it has been in appeasing radical Arabs and Iranians. And then there is Israel, the only nation in the Middle East with whom we share a common culture and a common commitment to liberal democracy, and with whom we have now been joined as a common victim of radical Islamic terrorism. Yet as we seek to embrace the terrorist sponsors in Tehran, we treat our Israeli ally as a dangerous nuisance.

Thus our president, following Powell's guidance, last week made this extraordinary statement: "We are fully committed to working with both sides [Israel and the Palestinian Authority] to bring the level of terror down to an acceptable level for both." An "acceptable level of terror" for both terrorists and their victims—now there's a goal for the war on terrorism! But the *reductio ad absurdum* of this policy was reached later in the week, as the United States was pressuring Israel not to break off talks, despite the continuation of Palestinian terrorism. To do so, the *New York Times* reported, would "risk the appearance of undermining Mr. Bush's war on terrorism." So that is the logic of the present situation: One of our allies must turn a blind eye to terror for the sake of a coalition with terror-supporting states in the pursuit of the war on terrorism. This is the level of incoherence to which the secretary of state has led the president. This moral and strategic incoherence risks undermining the president's—and America's—great venture.

We are often told not to worry, that some compromises have to be made now in order to get bin Laden, but that we are only in Phase One of the war. Later we can, presumably, turn on the people with whom we have made the compromises, and can break whatever promises we have made to our Arab friends. We can then fulfill President Bush's promise to go after all the terrorists who threaten us and the states that sponsor them.

But the world doesn't work that way. Once having promised not to go after Iraq, we are not going to turn on a dime and launch an attack. Once having compromised with Iranian-backed terrorism, we will not pivot and get serious about stopping it. If Powell's policy prevails, there will be no Phase Two. If he succeeds in enmeshing America in a coalition of the wicked, the war against terrorism will be brief, limited, and ineffectual. It will fail.

It need not fail. The broad struggle against terrorism and the states that sponsor it—the struggle the president promised the American people we would wage—is eminently winnable, and eminently worth winning. All the evidence suggests the American people will support doing what it takes. What they need and deserve is leadership that recognizes that the events of September 11, and the threat of worse disasters ahead, require a real break from the old ways of doing business. What we need now is not timidity disguised as prudence, but boldness commensurate with the mission and the moment.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

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What are the facts?

No "Sacrifice" Will Overcome the Hatred: Many still believe that the conflict between the Arabs and the Jews could be settled if the Israelis were willing to bring greater "sacrifices for peace". Such "sacrifices" would include relinquishing ever-larger portions of their tiny country (less than half the size of San Bernardino County in California) to the Palestinians, dismantling the "settlements" in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), handing the Golan Heights to Syria, and allowing the "return of the refugees" a group that has grown miraculously from about 500,000 to somewhere around 5 million, and the absorption of even a substantial fraction of which would signify the demographic end of the Jewish state. But by now, after over one year of the bloody war against Israel in the Al Aksa Intifada, it is clear to even the most confirmed "doves", to even the most ardent supporters of the "Oslo Peace Process," that absolutely nothing that Israel could do, any further "sacrifice" that Israel were prepared to bring would satisfy the Arabs and would promote peace. The sad but irrefutable conclusion is that only the complete disappearance of Israel, its annihilation, its being wiped off the map could satisfy the Arabs and most of the Moslem world.

During his recent visit to Syria, the Pope listened to Bashar-al-Asad, the President of Syria, declare that "...the Jews have betrayed Jesus Christ, with the same mentality with which they tried to betray and kill the prophet Mohammed." (Disappointingly, the Pope did not protest this canard, either right then or at a later date.) Saddam Hussein, the tyrant of Iraq, expressed the wishes of his country and of the Arab world with the succinct entreaty "God damn the Jews."

> "Israel's only course...is to assume its previous stance of unflinching deterrence...and not to be inhibited...to preempt resolutely if it appears necessary to assure survival of the country."

Mortal Hatred and the "Big Lie": The "big lie," invented by the notorious Joseph Goebbels of Nazi infamy, is a mainstay of Arab hatred and propaganda. In Egypt and Jordan (the two Arab countries technically at peace with Israel), government-controlled news sources published that Israel had distributed drug-laced chewing gum and candy to kill children and to make women sexually corrupt. The Jews (Israelis) are being accused of having introduced foot-and-mouth disease in the Middle East. The age-old calumny of Jews using the blood of Christian children in order to bake their Passover matzos is alive and well in Arab publications. The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, an egregious falsification originating in Czarist Russia, is a steady best-seller in all Arab countries. Among other malevolent fabrications, it accuses "international Jewry" of "limitless ambition, inexhaustible greed, and hatred beyond imagination."

In the controlled Arab press, Holocaust denial and accusation of the Zionists having been in cahoots with the German Nazis are regular features. Egypt's government-sponsored *Al Akhbar* newspaper has expressed fervent thanks to Adolf Hitler for having taken advance revenge on the "vilest criminals on the face of the earth." Still, it berates him for not having been thorough enough in his task of extermination. The Arabs do not consider Israel a normal country, but a creation of the devil, an excrescence, a malignant force of aggressors, murderers, infidels and barbarians. It should be destroyed, or the glory of God, no matter what sacrifices that might entail.

Mortal hatred against Israel and against the Jews is taught to Arab children from the very first grade. Children are encouraged to sacrifice themselves as martyrs and suicide missiles, with promises that Paradise with unimaginable pleasures awaits those who sacrifice themselves in the holy cause of killing Jews.

This bottomless hatred, a hatred that pervades the Arab world in all strata of society and is incessantly fomented by Arab governments, including those supposed to be "at peace" with Israel, cannot be assuaged by negotiation or by making any further "sacrifices for peace". Nothing will suffice, except the destruction, the complete disappearance of Israel. The Arab states, having been unable in over fifty years and in many wars to defeat and exterminate the hated Jews, are now feverishly arming themselves with "conventional weapons" (easily purchased from the West, including, sad to say, from the United States), and are ardently pursuing the development of weapons of mass annihilation. Just as the suicide bombers do not vacillate to sacrifice themselves, one can safely expect that, once in possession of such weapons, the Arabs will not hesitate to sacrifice millions of their own people in order to destroy Israel. Israel's only course in the face of this almost certain prospect is to assume its previous stance of unflinching deterrence and, as it once did in the destruction of the Iraqi atomic reactor at Osirak in 1981, not to be inhibited by "international opinion" to preempt resolutely if it appears necessary to assure survival of the country.

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George W. Bush, Bipartisan

On Capitol Hill, the Dems are happy, the GOP anxious. BY FRED BARNES

As he left a crowded House floor after his speech to Congress on September 20, George Bush didn't notice Richard Gephardt at first. But when the president glanced back, he spotted the House Democratic leader and walked over to greet him. Bush cuffed his hand behind Gephardt's neck and gave him an emotional hug. A week later, he took Gephardt with him aboard Air Force One for a trip to Chicago's O'Hare International Airport to announce new airport security measures. On the way back to Washington, they talked, one on one, for 90 minutes. A White House aide said he doubted Gephardt had ever had a session like that with President Clinton. And a House Republican said, somewhat warily, that the GOP president and the Democratic leader had bonded.

This is what Bush means by bipartisanship: keeping the opposition on board as the war against terrorism is pursued. It's a politically delicate task, and Bush has performed it ably. Prior to September 11, he had "zero relationship" with Gephardt, according to a Democratic official. Now they're in frequent contact. The same is true with Senate majority leader Tom Daschle. There's a "genuine relationship that didn't exist before," says a Daschle adviser. Bush isn't quite as chummy with Daschle as he is with Gephardt, but for the first two weeks after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon he talked to Daschle daily. And the meetings at the White House with Bush and the party of four from Capitol Hill—Daschle, Gephardt, plus Republican leaders Trent Lott and Denny Hastert—have gone swimmingly.

So all would seem well. Republicans and Democrats are united behind Bush in the war effort. This produced unusually quick action on three relevant measures that otherwise might have become bogged down in congressional debate. Least controversial was the "use of force" resolution authorizing Bush to go to war against Osama bin Laden and his terrorist network. That was followed by the budget deal, which boosted discretionary spending for 2002 by $25 billion more than Bush had sought earlier, but also shut down Democratic senator Teddy Kennedy's bid to lard the budget with billions more for education. The third was the $15 billion bailout of the airlines. Despite a threat by airlines to ground their planes, this legislation would have been wrangled over for days and might not have passed at all, except for Bush's deftness in getting the four congressional leaders to sign on. Each of them—and especially Gephardt—caught flak from his caucus for going along. Gephardt was lambasted for not insisting the bailout include laid-off airline employees.

Indeed Bush has skillfully courted Democrats. But for many Republicans, Bush's emphasis on bipartisanship and "what we will do together" means caving to Gephardt and Daschle. It didn't happen on the counter-terrorism bill. Attorney General John Ashcroft got most of what he asked for, which suggests he should have asked for stronger measures. But on legislation to spark the economy and strengthen airline security, the White House has bent over backwards to accommodate Democrats. This has upset not only conservative backbenchers, but also Lott and House majority leader Dick Armey and whip Tom DeLay. Hastert, as House speaker, is more serene. The dissidents can only grouse. Given the circumstances—a war, a popular Republican president—a GOP revolt in Congress is unthinkable. In fact, Republicans who fear the stimulus package won't work say they must vote for it anyway—as their patriotic duty.

Nor are they free to criticize the president openly. Armey says that if he attacked Bush in a town meeting in his Texas district, his constituents "would take my head off." So he goes no further than offering public advice to Bush. "I don't think the president wants to leverage his high standing with the American people to get a growth package," he told me. "Right now he doesn't have that disposition. I think he should." If he pushed, Bush could get a truly stimulative package of tax cuts. But the president is leery of "ruffling our non-partisan feathers." Armey isn't. He says Democrats should be barred from loading the stimulus package with "social-political" policies, like extended unemployment benefits that have "no growth impact."

Outsiders *are* free to jump on Bush. Steve Moore, president of the Club for Growth, says the White House mistakenly thinks it will be judged on "whether they can put a stimulus package together, not on whether it works." Worse, Bush is looking to stimulate consumer demand when the problem is an "investment drought," Moore says. No one at the White House pressed for a cut in the capital gains rate, and the bid by economic coordinator Larry Lindsey to trim the corporate income tax rate was quickly abandoned. The White House was not oblivious to the GOP unrest. Republicans were told the stimulus pack-

Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.

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Sources:
1: "Summary of Findings from the 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse," Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Dept. of Health and Human Services (Washington, DC: SAMHSA, August 2000), p. G5, Table G5. (Lifetime use, any illicit drug: 87,734,000; Use in past year, any illicit drug, 26,220,000.)
2: "Summary of Findings from the 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse," Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Dept. of Health and Human Services (Washington, DC: SAMHSA, August 2000), p. 36. ("In 1999, an estimated 3.6 million Americans [1.6 percent of the total population age 12 and older] were dependent on illicit drugs.")

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age would go through the House Ways and Means Committee and they could try to change it there. And Bush appeared in the Rose Garden last Friday to promote a $60 billion-plus package that was all tax cuts and no spending. "We ought to stimulate demand by accelerating the marginal tax cuts that we've passed and I've signed," he said. Accelerate the cuts for all income tax brackets, as Republicans want, or only for the lower ones, as Democrats favor? Bush didn't say.

He also didn't mention the other hot button issue for Republicans, airport security. Bush has proposed broader federal supervision of the current system in which private firms provide security that is paid for by the airlines. Democrats want full federalization of the security operation—in other words, a new federal agency. The problem is Bush's disinclination to fight federalization and create a rift with Democrats. He insists on security legislation even though federalization has a better than 50-50 chance of passing. House Republicans told Hastert the president should strengthen airport security through executive orders. Nope, said Hastert. There must be a bill. Republicans grumbled it was another concession to Gephardt and Daschle.

Maybe it was. There was no doubt, however, about the decision to put off the bid for Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), what used to be known as fast-track authority. This would protect trade bills from being nibbled to death by amendments in Congress. Bush has put a high priority on TPA, and Robert Zoellick, the U.S. trade representative, gave a speech recently saying its passage is urgent. But Gephardt, who strongly opposes it, complained first to Hastert and then to the president that the issue is divisive and would hurt the bipartisan spirit needed for agreement on the stimulus package and airline security bill. Not surprisingly, consideration of TPA was postponed. It's not, a Hastert aide said, on the "have-to-do-right-now list." ♦

Not Serious About Surveillance

Neither the administration nor Congress is ready to do what's needed. BY GARY SCHMITT

IN THE AFTERMATH of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the Bush administration has proposed a number of legal changes to improve the government's ability to investigate terrorists. The largest number of these changes involve the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, a statute enacted in 1978 that governs the use of clandestine physical searches and wiretaps against spies and terrorists living in the United States. Although the suggested changes to FISA are probably useful, they are only marginal adjustments to a law that is deeply problematic and needs a serious overhaul. In other words, the administration and Congress seem content to fiddle even after New York has burned.

The changes the administration proposes to FISA are designed to bring the law into line with up-to-date technology. In 1978, the communications revolution was still years away; landlines and desk phones were the norm. Today, disposable cell phones and the Internet have transformed how we—and terrorists—communicate. Accordingly, the Justice Department wants to allow the government, for example, to seek a warrant for a "roving" wiretap, applicable to all the phones a given suspect might use; under current law, the FBI must obtain a separate warrant for every line it taps. As Attorney General John Ashcroft has argued, there is no attempt here to change the "underlying" law: "We are not asking the law to expand; just to grow as technology grows."

But it is precisely the underlying law that needs fixing. A bit of history will make this plain.

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act was enacted in the wake of newspaper headlines and congressional investigations in the mid 1970s detailing indiscriminate domestic eavesdropping by the American intelligence community. Until then, the constitutional presumption was that when it came to wiretaps and the like, presidents were free to collect intelligence as they thought necessary, both abroad and at home. Wiretaps for criminal investigations were different—since the potential consequences for a citizen's life and liberty were different. In criminal cases, the Fourth Amendment's requirement of a warrant and "probable cause" applied.

With the passage of FISA, however, Fourth Amendment protections were extended to electronic surveillance for intelligence purposes. Under the act, selected federal judges sit as members of a FISA court and review, in secret, requests by the attorney general for warrants authorizing searches or wiretaps to collect information about foreign intelligence agents or international terrorists. In making his case for a warrant, an attorney general must set out "a statement of facts and circumstances relied upon . . . to justify his belief that the target is an agent of a foreign power" or "engages . . . in international terrorism." The court may approve the warrant only when "there is probable cause to believe that the target" is an agent or terrorist. Broadly put, wiretaps and the like can no

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longer be used to collect mere intelligence or be directed against individuals unless the government is already pretty sure its target is an agent or a terrorist.

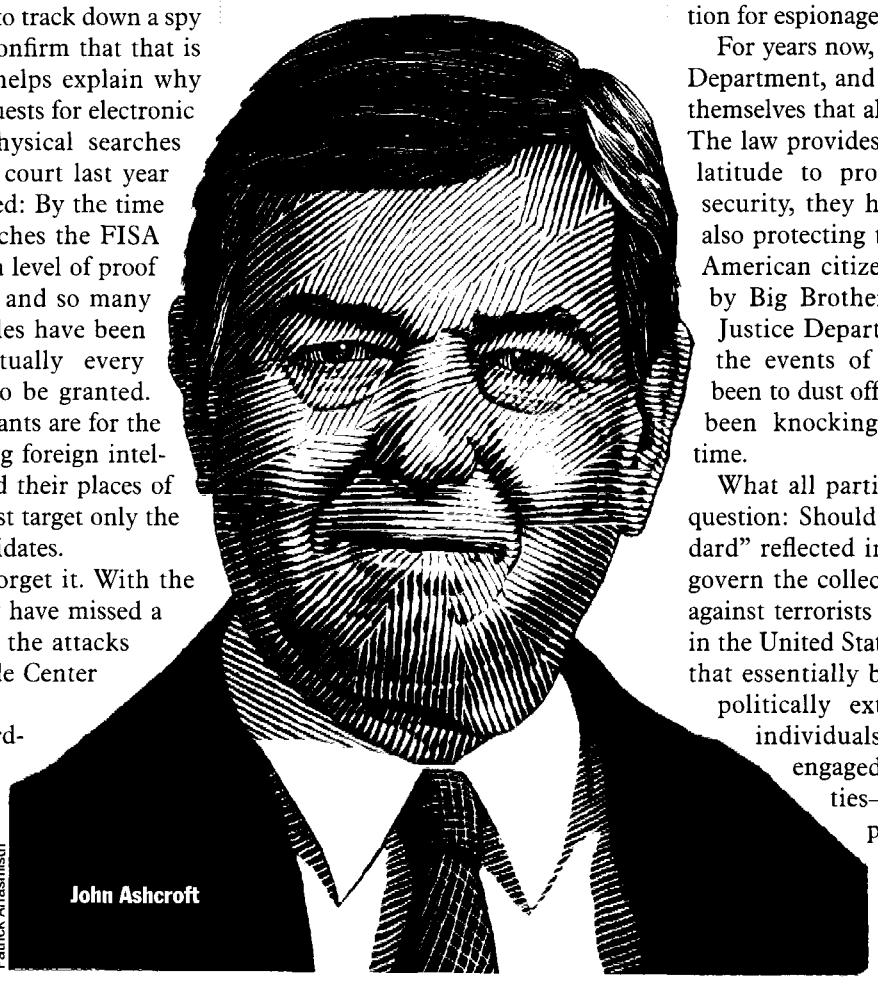
The difficulty with this standard is that for all practical purposes it means the FBI and the Justice Department have to be convinced that someone is dirty *before* they seek a warrant. The Bureau, then, uses electronic surveillance not so much to track down a spy or terrorist as to confirm that that is what he is. This helps explain why just over 1,000 requests for electronic surveillance or physical searches were made to the court last year and all were granted: By the time an application reaches the FISA court, so rigorous a level of proof has been reached, and so many bureaucratic hurdles have been cleared, that virtually every request deserves to be granted. Most of these warrants are for the purpose of covering foreign intelligence officers and their places of "business." The rest target only the most obvious candidates.

Anyone else—forget it. With the result that we may have missed a chance to prevent the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

In August, according to news reports, the FBI asked the Justice Department to seek a FISA warrant to search the computer of a French Moroccan named Zacarias Moussaoui. This man had come to the attention of the Bureau when an instructor at a Minnesota flight school had alerted the Bureau that he was asking for lessons on how to steer a commercial airliner, though not on how to take off or land.

Shortly thereafter, French intelligence informed U.S. intelligence that Moussaoui was on a terrorist "watch list" and was suspected of having trained in Afghanistan. Even so, Justice rejected the Bureau's request for a FISA warrant on the grounds that it lacked "probable cause" to believe Moussaoui was a terrorist. Moussaoui is now being held as a material witness in connection with the terrorist attack and is suspected of being the missing fifth in one of the highjacked planes.

Under FISA, moreover, it doesn't matter how grave a suspected threat may be, how severe the potential loss of life or the potential damage to national security: The standard for getting a warrant remains the same. In the case of the scientist Wen Ho Lee, for example, the codes and databases he downloaded and removed from the nuclear weapons lab in Los Alamos were of such a nature that, according to his supervisor, "in the wrong hands, [they could] change the global strategic balance." Nevertheless, there were deemed insufficient grounds for tapping Lee's phone or examining his computer even though he was one of a small group of laboratory employees who (a) had access to the W-88 warhead design information secured by the Chinese, (b) had visited China in the period when apparently Beijing acquired the data, (c) had unusually amicable relations with Chinese scientists visiting the labs, and (d) had previously befriended a scientist working at another weapons lab who himself was under investigation for espionage.



Patrick Arrasmisth

John Ashcroft

For years now, the FBI, the Justice Department, and Congress have told themselves that all is well with FISA. The law provides more than enough latitude to protect the country's security, they have claimed, while also protecting the civil liberties of American citizens from intrusions by Big Brother. Accordingly, the Justice Department's response to the events of September 11 has been to dust off proposals that have been knocking around for some time.

What all parties avoid is the key question: Should the "criminal standard" reflected in FISA continue to govern the collection of intelligence against terrorists and spies operating in the United States? Does a standard that essentially bans surveillance of politically extreme groups and individuals until they are engaged in criminal activities—a standard that precludes any balancing of constraints on investigators against the relative risks to national security—provide the government the means it needs to protect the country?

Until now, civil libertarians on the left and right have dominated this debate, opposing any alteration in the law that might degrade Americans' civil liberties. Yet one wonders whether the strictures these purists defend—which so manifestly failed to protect the liberties of the Americans killed on September 11—actually served instead to protect the machinations of the terrorists. ♦

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The Varieties of Muslim Experience

There are two, three, many Arab streets.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

UNTIL SEPTEMBER 11, the American media typically portrayed only two kinds of Arabs and Muslims: rich oil princes and unemployed ranters in the streets. Even after the atrocities in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, the common wisdom has it that we must listen to the "Arab street," because, we are told, "the street" determines consciousness in Muslim societies. Nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, in the highly stratified Arab and Muslim nations, the street counts for nothing, which is the main reason people often crowd it yelling hateful slogans.

Instead, the oil princes and the angry demonstrators are the two extremes in societies that are a great deal more educated, diverse, and complex than we have led ourselves to believe. We have overlooked the simplest and most obvious truth about the Islamic world: Its essential values are neither nihilistic nor exotic. Rather, they are the values associated with working, saving, and building families. The kinds of people who will determine the future of Islamic civilization are seldom seen on our TV screens. Just a few examples:

* Indian, Bengali, and non-fundamentalist Pakistani professionals, prominent worldwide in information technology, medicine, and scientific research.

Most Muslims on the Indian subcontinent long ago rejected the radical strain of Islam known as Wahhabism. Muslims ruled over millions of Hindus for centuries, living alongside them, and even, in the case of some scholars, finding seeds of monotheism in Hindu paganism. Muslims from the subcontinent form a silent majority in American Islam, their voices drowned out by the clamor of the aggrieved.

* Traditional but tolerant Sufi Muslims.

The 13th-century Sufi mystical poet Jalaluddin Rumi, who was born in Afghanistan but lived in what is now Turkey, is popular with New Age readers today. Yet few Americans realize that Sufis have long fought Islamic fundamentalism by teaching principles of reconciliation among all religious believers.

* Chechen, Dagestani, and other Muslims from the former-Soviet Caucasus bitterly opposed to Islamic fundamentalism.

Most Chechens remain extremely angry about the attempt of a disaffected warlord, Shamil Basayev, and a Saudi-backed Wahhabi Arab named Khattab to divide the Chechens and wreck their resistance to the Russians. Armed Wahhabis' incursion from Chechnya into Dagestan inspired similar outrage.

* West African and North African Islamic intellectuals.

Many Western intellectuals read Moroccan and Egyptian authors like Mohammad Shukri and Nobel prize winner Naguib Mahfouz and listen to the music of North Africa and the Middle East. But the struggle of mainstream Muslims in Algeria and Egypt against bloody fundamentalist terrorism in their countries has never received the attention it merits in our media.

But if our foreign correspondents

Stephen Schwartz is working on a book tentatively titled The Two Faces of Islam.

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give short shrift to groups like these while pandering to the Arab street, so also in portraying Islam in America they give undue prominence to groups that amount to an extension of the Arab street on U.S. soil. Such groups as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the American Muslim Council, and the American Muslim Alliance import into our public square the rhetoric and deceit characteristic of Islamic fundamentalism.

Of these groups, CAIR has been the most adroit, and therefore the most dangerous. Based in Washington, D.C., it was created in the mid 1990s to define the position of American Muslims in politics and international relations. Although its Islam is fundamentalist and anti-Western, it pretends to represent all Muslims in their "relations with America," as if practicing a sort of religious diplomacy comparable to that of the Vatican. Before September 11, CAIR was amazingly good at intimidating American journalists into shunning such terms as "Islamic fundamentalism."

CAIR and other such groups have a keen appreciation of Americans' desire to be nice and American journalists' desire to be politically correct. Thus, they have framed their assault on American public opinion in terms of sensitivity: that it is hurtful to "the Muslims" for American media to describe any among them as fundamentalists or terrorists.

But these groups are not the only spokesmen for Islam in America. One who stands out as being of a different ilk is Sheikh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, leader of the Naqshbandi Sufi order in the United States and chairman of the Islamic Supreme Council of America, an advocacy group for mainstream Islam. Kabbani has spent years fighting the advocates of fundamentalism.

In recent weeks, Kabbani has been interviewed in our major media, where he has repeated his forthright condemnation of all forms of extremism. Unlike CAIR and other devious groups, which condemn terrorism in

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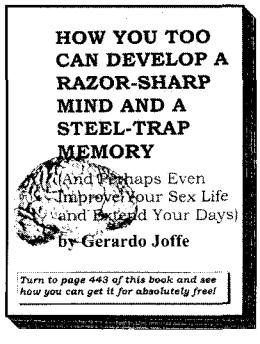

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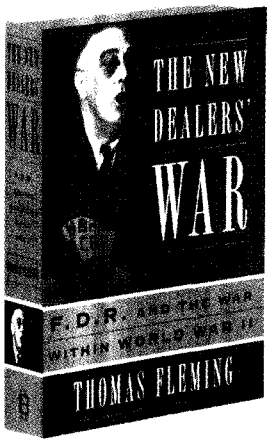

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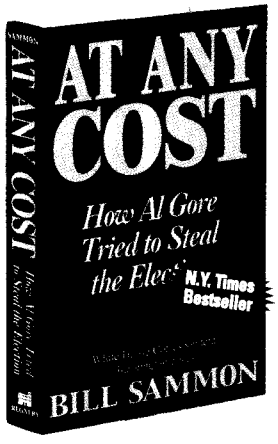

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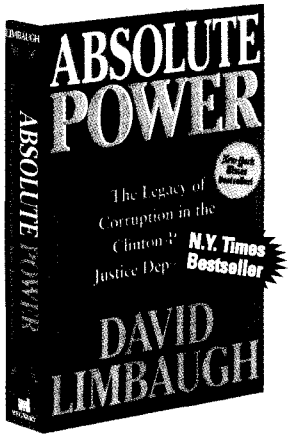

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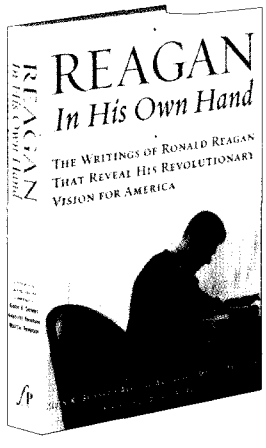

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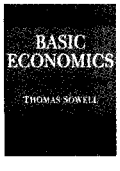

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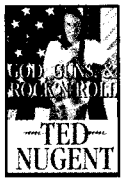

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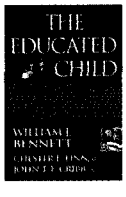

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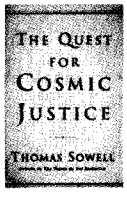

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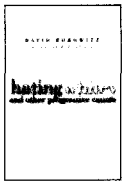

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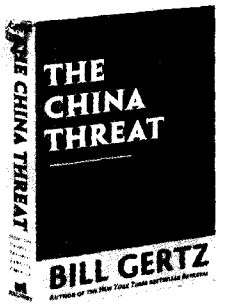

The China Threat – Bill Gertz, the best-selling author of *Betrayal* reveals in chilling detail that the threat to our national security is very real. The Chinese have a long-term plan to attack and defeat the United States which is already in motion. This is a must read book for anyone concerned with national defense.
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the abstract, Sheikh Kabbani names names. He points out that Osama bin Laden and those like him draw on the totalitarian Wahhabi strain in Islam to justify not only terrorist attacks on ordinary people throughout the world but also violence against Muslims who disagree with them.

Unfortunately, representatives of CAIR and other groups fronting for fundamentalism and slippery about terrorism continue to have entrée to the White House, while Sheikh Kabbani has yet to meet with President Bush. Shouldn't that oversight soon be corrected? And shouldn't American diplomats and journalists broaden their view of Islam, and the American public learn more about the Muslim world? ♦

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Patrick Leahy, Roadblock

More than any other senator, he has stalled anti-terror bills. BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

TWO DAYS after the new era of bipartisanship began, it ended. At least in the Senate.

On September 13, Senator Jon Kyl, one of the chamber's top experts on terrorism, introduced an amendment to an appropriations bill that would give law enforcement some of the additional tools President Bush is seeking. But Senator Patrick Leahy, one of the chamber's top experts on delaying anti-terrorism legislation, moved quickly to defeat it.

"The alleged bipartisanship you refer to is a myth," Senator Kyl, an Arizona Republican, told me late last week. "There is a lot of rhetoric about bipartisanship, but it's nonsense. It's really quite partisan under the surface, and I expect it to remain so."

Kyl's assessment echoes what many other members of Congress are saying privately. But if Kyl is particularly glum, he has good reason. He has been pushing anti-terrorism legislation for years, measures that today—despite widespread consensus among terrorism experts and members of both parties that they are needed—remain mere proposals. Senator Leahy is the chief reason for the inaction.

Kyl isn't the only Republican irritated with the lack of genuine bipartisanship, and he is not alone in grumbling about Leahy, the new chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Senators Orrin Hatch and Jeff Sessions, among others, have grown weary of Leahy's tactics.

"There's just a lot of frustration with him among Republicans at the federal level," says a Senate leadership aide, of the senior senator from Vermont.

Leahy has long been one of the Senate's most liberal and partisan Democrats. When fellow Vermonter Jim Jeffords gave Democrats control of the Senate by bailing on the GOP in May, and when Senator Joe Biden passed up the top spot on Judiciary in favor of the same position on Foreign Relations, Leahy lucked into a chairmanship that has boosted his stature. Running the Judiciary Committee makes him not only one of the Senate's most liberal and partisan Democrats, but one of its most influential.

Leahy's arguments against the September 13 amendment to the Commerce/Justice/State appropriations bill—principally that the Senate was moving too quickly and that senators had not yet heard from the administration—were familiar. He raised the same objections last October when almost singlehanded he foiled an anti-terrorism bill with many of the same provisions.

Last year, Leahy promised he'd move the bill after the Clinton Justice Department signed off on it. Since many of the tools in the bill were powers that FBI Director Louis Freeh had been requesting for years, the department gave a thumbs-up after some minor tweaking. But Leahy wasn't done.

His staff submitted a list of 10 changes to the bill's cosponsors, Senator Kyl and Senator Dianne Feinstein, then the ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Committee's Technology, Terrorism and Government Infor-

Stephen F. Hayes is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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mation subcommittee. Soon after registering those objections, he came up with another four.

"It appears to me that his objections constantly evolve," says a senior GOP aide. "Whatever is convenient, he objects to."

Though the bill's cosponsors agreed to make all but 2 of the 14 changes, Leahy still tried to block the bill. Eventually, it passed the Senate without Leahy's support, but far too late in the term to win consideration in the House. Mission accomplished.

The September 13 amendment this year—a more limited proposal than Attorney General John Ashcroft would make days later—brought much the same response from Leahy.

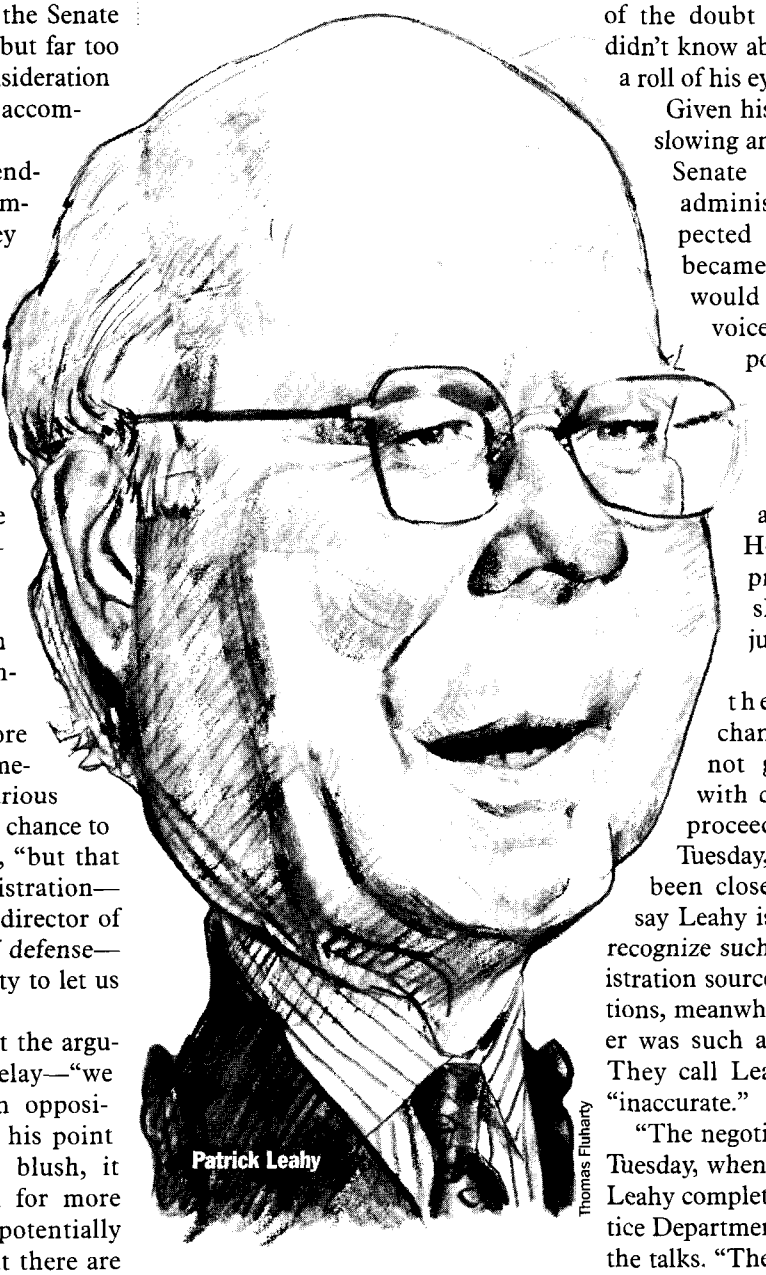
"Unfortunately, because this is something that we have had no hearings on, we haven't had the discussions in the appropriate committees—Intelligence, Armed Services, and Judiciary—we are somewhat limited in opposition," Leahy complained.

"I would feel far more comfortable voting on something like this if these various committees not only had a chance to look at it," he continued, "but that President Bush's administration—the attorney general, the director of the CIA, the secretary of defense—would have the opportunity to let us know their views on it."

Put aside for a moment the argument Leahy makes for delay—"we are somewhat limited in opposition"—and consider just his point about hearings. At first blush, it seems reasonable to ask for more time to consider such potentially important legislation. But there are few subjects over the past several years on which Congress has heard more—and acted less—than terrorism. Hundreds of experts, dozens of hearings, and three commissions later—no action.

Just five months ago, the Senate discussed terrorism and heard from Secretary of State Colin Powell, Attorney General Ashcroft, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, and others in the administration.

Although the Ashcroft proposal—which later became the focus of the anti-terrorism discussion—did contain some new items, the September 13 amendment was based almost entirely on last year's Kyl/Feinstein bill. And that legislation, in turn, essentially repackaged the recommendations of the most recent terrorism study, a report by the 1999 National Commission on Terrorism. The point is, these issues have been thoroughly discussed.


Patrick Leahy

Thomas Fluharty

"I'm not sure that Senator Leahy even knew all of the work we have done on these issues," says Senator Kyl. "Notwithstanding the fact that he should have."

"I'm going to give him the benefit of the doubt and say that he just didn't know about it," says Kyl, with a roll of his eyes.

Given his record of blocking or slowing anti-terrorism measures, Senate Republicans and administration officials expected resistance when it became clear that Leahy would be the Democrats' voice on the Ashcroft proposals.

Last week, when anti-terrorism talks temporarily broke down, Leahy publicly accused the White House of reneging on a previous deal about sharing secret grand jury information.

"Apparently last night the administration changed its mind and [is] not going to go forward with changes in grand jury proceedings," Leahy said on Tuesday, suggesting a deal had been close. (Some Republicans say Leahy is uniquely qualified to recognize such double talk.) Administration sources close to the negotiations, meanwhile, say that there never was such a deal-before-the-deal. They call Leahy's characterization "inaccurate."

"The negotiations were fluid until Tuesday, when our negotiations with Leahy completely stalled," says a Justice Department official familiar with the talks. "They weren't even returning our phone calls or e-mails."

Leahy spokesman David Carle rejects suggestions that his boss was simply slowing things down.

"His aim wasn't to see how much he could take out of the president's

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bill, but to make sure there were proper checks and balances that struck an appropriate balance with civil liberties in giving new powers to government."

But even after the new Senate language came out Friday morning, administration negotiators were concerned about language added by Leahy and Senate majority leader Tom Daschle on money-laundering. The administration was "agnostic" on the particulars, but fought to keep the language out in order to expedite passage of the anti-terrorism legislation alone.

Both administration and Judiciary Committee sources say that much of the hard work on the anti-terrorism legislation is done. Still, they fear more delays as they attempt to smooth out differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill.

No doubt both sides are eager to get past this partisan wrangling and return to—as the new cliché has it—normalcy.

Something easy like, say, judicial nominations. ♦

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The "Blowback" Myth

Bad history makes bad policy.

BY THOMAS HENRIKSEN

EVEN BEFORE President George W. Bush approved covert support for the factions opposing the Taliban regime, pundits began warning us about "blowback," in which we are engulfed by the unintended consequences of our actions. Time and again, we are told, American support for Afghan resistance to the Soviet occupation in the 1980s "blew back" on us as Afghanistan came to harbor Osama bin Laden, the chief perpetrator in the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. This bad history could potentially lead to bad policy at a time when more American lives—civilian and military—are on the line.

Like other accepted myths—Paul Kennedy's American "imperial overstretch," CIA knowledge of a contra-drug dealers connection, the "accidental presidency" of George W. Bush—the blowback story has taken on a life of its own. A putative CIA term, "blowback" is now a staple of pundits' pontifications. Anthony Lewis of the *New York Times* recently invoked the Law of Unintended Consequences and declared that misdirected "quick strikes" by U.S. aircraft on targets in Afghanistan would likely kill many civilians. According to Lewis's version of the law, this would produce "an opposite and totally disproportionate reaction"—just as, allegedly, America's arming of the anti-Soviet forces led to Afghanistan's ending up "in the hands of anti-Western Islamic extremists."

Thomas Henriksen is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and author of Foreign Policy for America in the Twenty-first Century.

Lewis & Co. are recycling and popularizing the arguments made by Chalmers Johnson in his 2000 book *Blowback: The Cost and Consequences of American Empire*. A proponent of the late 1980s flim-flam about the superiority of Japan's model of "guided capitalism," Johnson has now taken up the banner of a backlash to U.S. global hegemony. He describes bin Laden as "a former protégé of the United States," without mentioning that the terrorist mastermind brought his own financial resources to the anti-Soviet struggle. To Johnson, America's imperial structure, made up of military and economic power, invites a host of eventual, if unspecified, paybacks.

If Johnson paints with a broad brush, attributing every global wrong to U.S. policy, John K. Cooley focuses on Afghanistan as the genesis of political Islam's anti-Americanism in his 1999 book *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism*. A journalist and author, Cooley reduces the debate on the U.S. role in Afghanistan to a new low by seeing it through a mono-causal lens: The CIA caused terrorism and drugs to flow from Afghanistan. Never mind that Kabul was a hippie drug mecca in the sixties.

Then there are the rejuvenated "peace activists" left over from Vietnam War protests, such as Noam Chomsky. In a recent interview, Chomsky referred to bin Laden as a "graduate" of the "terrorist network set up by the CIA and its associates 20 years ago to fight a Holy War against the Russians." Coming out of the hate-America woodwork for the

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first time since the Gulf War, such activists are certain to protest any Bush administration effort to help the Afghan people displace the Taliban. The mounting evidence of the Taliban's more-than-passive support of the horrific assault on the United States cannot extinguish their insane belief that some 6,000 people—Americans and others from around the world—deserved their fate because of a "blowback" legacy.

Here are the facts. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, ultimately sending over 100,000 troops to prop up the faltering pro-Moscow regime of Babrak Karmal. Reacting as they have for centuries to foreign incursions, the Afghans resisted. First President Carter, then, more decisively, Ronald Reagan moved to support the Afghan resistance, which was joined by Arab volunteers from throughout the Middle East. This effort grew to include training, equipping, and arming the mujahedeen forces, including the transfer of shoulder-fired, ground-to-air Stinger missiles that lessened Soviet aerial dominance. The invasion and resistance became a pivotal episode in the eventual breakdown of the calcified and corrupt Soviet Union.

Far from "creating" an anti-Soviet movement in Afghanistan, the United States (along with Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and China) assisted it logistically—much the same way we underwrote resistance to communism in Poland's Solidarity movement and the contras in Central America (neither of which later "blew back" on the United States). Now the Bush administration ponders the extent of support it will provide the Northern Alliance, a loose grouping of ethnic and political opponents to the Taliban regime.

Helping the enemy of our enemy whenever possible is generally good policy. Unfortunately, the United States ignored this precept when it abandoned the Iraqi opposition to Saddam Hussein after the Gulf War—even though we had encouraged its rise. Minimal assistance at that critical juncture might have rid the world of a cruel tyrant who now sponsors terrorism, destabilizes the Middle East, and strives to assemble weapons of mass destruction.

AP / Wide World Photos

Anti-Soviet Afghan guerrillas, 1980.

A grander question is, what if the United States had not aided the Muslim-led anti-Soviet movement? Standing on the sidelines while Moscow brutalized a pastoral people would have diminished America's prestige and undercut our Middle East policies. By not bolstering the Afghan people, we would have allowed the Soviet Union to escape a devastating wound.

After World War II, the United States helped friend and foe rebuild because it was in our national interest. The same generosity and strategic mix justified sending billions of dollars to Eastern Europe and Russia after the Berlin Wall came down. But in the case of Afghanistan, after the collapse of the pro-Soviet Najibullah government in April 1992, rather than aid a war-ravaged "front-line state" in the Cold War, Washington did nothing. We neither furnished assistance nor embarked on credible diplomatic efforts with neighboring states to stem the flow of weapons then pouring into one or another of the Afghan factions.

This left Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran free to support client Afghan fighters. Washington turned its back on some 45,000 combatants who were left to their own devices when the Soviets withdrew after a 10-year incursion. These idle warriors were swept up into a civil war, from which the Taliban ultimately emerged the temporary victors.

This brings us back to America's leveraging of surrogates in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. Aiding forces within a country to combat an evil regime spares U.S. casualties, contributes to a force with internal legitimacy, broadens the anti-regime coalition, and may well lay the foundation for a more enlightened society. To be sure, backing indigenous insurgents can have pitfalls, but failing to build support for a nasty regime's opponents is often worse still. ♦

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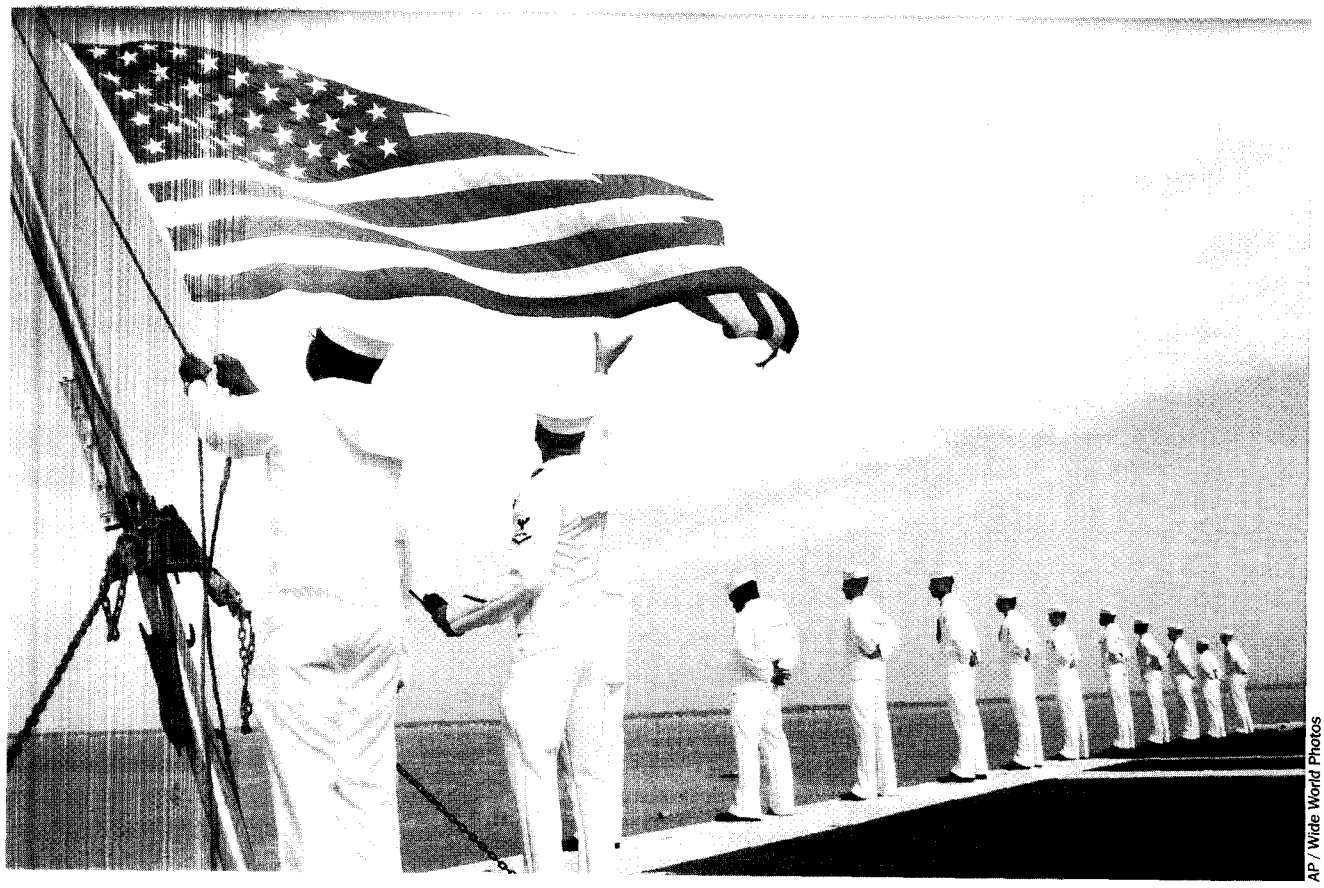

AP / Wide World Photos

The Case for American Empire

The most realistic response to terrorism is for the United States unambiguously to embrace its imperial role.

By Max Boot

Many have suggested that the September 11 attack on America was payback for U.S. imperialism. If only we had not gone around sticking our noses where they did not belong, perhaps we would not now be contemplating a crater in lower Manhattan. The solution is obvious: The United States must become a kinder, gentler nation, must eschew quixotic missions abroad, must become, in Pat Buchanan's phrase, "a republic, not an empire." In fact this analysis is exactly backward: The September 11 attack was a result of *insufficient* American involvement and ambition; the solution is to be more expansive in our goals and more assertive in their implementation.

It has been said, with the benefit of faulty hindsight, that America erred in providing the mujahedeen with weapons and training that some of them now turn against us. But this was amply justified by the exigencies of the Cold War. The real problem is that we pulled out of Afghanistan after 1989. In so doing, the George H.W. Bush administration was following a classic realpolitik policy. We had gotten involved in this distant nation to wage a proxy war against the Soviet Union. Once that larger war was over, we could safely pull out and let the Afghans resolve their own affairs. And if the consequence was the rise of the Taliban—homicidal mullahs driven by a hatred

Max Boot, editorial features editor of the Wall Street Journal, *is author of* The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power, *due out in spring 2002 from Basic Books.*

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of modernity itself—so what? Who cares who rules this flyspeck in Central Asia? So said the wise elder statesmen. The "so what" question has now been answered definitively; the answer lies in the rubble of the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

We had better sense when it came to the Balkans, which could without much difficulty have turned into another Afghanistan. When Muslim Bosnians rose up against Serb oppression in the early 1990s, they received support from many of the same Islamic extremists who also backed the mujahedeen in Afghanistan. The Muslims of Bosnia are not particularly fundamentalist—after years of Communist rule, most are not all that religious—but they might have been seduced by the siren song of the mullahs if no one else had come to champion their cause. Luckily, someone else did. NATO and the United States intervened to stop the fighting in Bosnia, and later in Kosovo. Employing its leverage, the U.S. government pressured the Bosnian government into expelling the mujahedeen. Just last week, NATO and Bosnian police arrested four men in Sarajevo suspected of links to international terrorist groups. Some Albanian hotheads next tried to stir up trouble in Macedonia, but, following the dispatch of a NATO peacekeeping force, they have now been pressured to lay down their arms. U.S. imperialism—a liberal and humanitarian imperialism, to be sure, but imperialism all the same—appears to have paid off in the Balkans.

The problem is that, while the Clinton administration eventually did something right in the Balkans, elsewhere it was scandalously irresolute in the assertion of U.S. power. By cutting and running from Somalia after the deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers, Bill Clinton fostered a widespread impression that we could be chased out of a country by anyone who managed to kill a few Americans. (Ronald Reagan did much the same thing by pulling out of Lebanon after the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks.) After the attacks on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, Clinton sent cruise missiles—not soldiers—to strike a symbolic blow against bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan and a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan. Those attacks were indeed symbolic, though not in the way Clinton intended. They symbolized not U.S. determination but rather passivity in the face of terrorism. And this impression was reinforced by the failure of either Bill Clinton or George W. Bush to retaliate for the attack on the USS *Cole* in October 2000, most likely carried out by Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. All these displays of weakness emboldened our enemies to commit greater and more outrageous acts of aggression, much as the failure of the West to contest Japan's occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s, or Mussolini's incursion into Abyssinia, encouraged the Axis powers toward more spectacular depravities.

The problem, in short, has not been excessive American assertiveness but rather insufficient assertiveness. The question is whether, having now been attacked, we will act as a great power should.

It is striking—and no coincidence—that America now faces the prospect of military action in many of the same lands where generations of British colonial soldiers went on campaigns. Afghanistan, Sudan, Libya, Egypt, Arabia, Mesopotamia (Iraq), Palestine, Persia, the Northwest Frontier (Pakistan)—these are all places where, by the 19th century, ancient imperial authority, whether Ottoman, Mughal, or Safavid, was crumbling, and Western armies had to quell the resulting disorder. In Egypt, in 1882, Lieutenant General Sir Garnet Wolseley put down a nationalist revolt led by a forerunner of Nasser, Colonel Ahmed Arabi. In Sudan, in the 1880s, an early-day bin Laden who called himself the Mahdi (Messiah) rallied the Dervishes for a *jihad* to spread fundamentalist Islam to neighboring states. Mahdism was crushed by Sir Horatio Herbert Kitchener on the battlefield of Omdurman in 1898. Both Sudan and Egypt remained relatively quiet thereafter, until Britain finally pulled out after World War II.

In Afghanistan, the British suffered a serious setback in 1842 when their forces had to retreat from Kabul and were massacred—all but Dr. William Brydon, who staggered into Jalalabad to tell the terrible tale. This British failure has been much mentioned in recent weeks to support the proposition that the Afghans are invincible fighters. Less remembered is the sequel. An army under Major General George Pollock forced the Khyber Pass, recaptured Kabul, burned down the Great Bazaar to leave "some lasting mark of the just retribution of an outraged nation," and then marched back to India.

Thirty-six years later, in 1878, the British returned to Afghanistan. The highlight of the Second Afghan War was Lieutenant General Frederick Roberts's once-famous march from Kabul to Kandahar. Although the British were always badly outnumbered, they repeatedly bested larger Afghan armies. The British did not try to impose a colonial administration in Kabul, but Afghanistan became in effect a British protectorate with its foreign policy controlled by the raj. This arrangement lasted until the Third Afghan War in 1919, when Britain, bled dry by World War I, finally left the Afghans to their own devices.

Afghanistan and other troubled lands today cry out for the sort of enlightened foreign administration once provided by self-confident Englishmen in jodhpurs and pith

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Armed Forces Information Service

Previous page and above: The USS Theodore Roosevelt, *which embarked from Norfolk, Va., September 19, 2001.*

helmets. Is imperialism a dusty relic of a long-gone era? Perhaps. But it's interesting to note that in the 1990s East Timor, Cambodia, Kosovo, and Bosnia all became wards of the international community (Cambodia only temporarily). This precedent could easily be extended, as suggested by David Rieff, into a formal system of United Nations mandates modeled on the mandatory territories sanctioned by the League of Nations in the 1920s. Following the defeat of the German and Ottoman empires, their colonial possessions were handed out to the Allied powers, in theory to prepare their inhabitants for eventual self-rule. (America was offered its own mandate over Armenia, the Dardanelles, and Constantinople, but the Senate rejected it along with the Treaty of Versailles.) This was supposed to be "for the good of the natives," a phrase that once made progressives snort in derision, but may be taken more seriously after the left's conversion (or, rather, reversion) in the 1990s to the cause of "humanitarian" interventions.

The mealy-mouthed modern euphemism is "nation-building," but "state building" is a better description. Building a national consciousness, while hardly impossible (the British turned a collection of princely states into modern India), is a long-term task. Building a working state administration is a more practical short-term objective that has been achieved by countless colonial regimes, including the United States in Haiti (1915-1933), the Dominican Republic (1916-1924), Cuba (1899-1902, 1906-1909), and the Philippines (1899-1935), to say nothing of the achievements of generals Lucius Clay in Germany and Douglas MacArthur in Japan.

Unilateral U.S. rule may no longer be an option today. But the United States can certainly lead an international occupation force under U.N. auspices, with the cooperation of some Muslim nations. This would be a huge improvement in any number of lands that support or shelter terrorists. For the sake of simplicity, let's consider two: Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Afghanistan, as I write, the Special Forces are said to be hunting Osama bin Laden and his followers. Let us hope they do not catch him, at least not alive. It would not

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be an edifying spectacle to see this scourge of the infidels—this holy warrior who rejects the Enlightenment and all its works—asserting a medley of constitutional rights in a U.S. courtroom, perhaps even in the federal courthouse located just a short walk from where the World Trade Center once stood. But whatever happens with bin Laden, it is clear we cannot leave the Taliban in power. It is a regime that can bring nothing but grief to its people, its neighbors, and the United States.

But when we oust the Taliban, what comes next? Will we repeat our mistake of a decade ago and leave? What if no responsible government immediately emerges? What if millions of Afghans are left starving? Someone would have to step in and help—and don't bet on the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees getting the job done. The United States, in cooperation with its allies, would be left with the responsibility to feed the hungry, tend the sick, and impose the rule of law. This is what we did for the defeated peoples of Germany, Italy, and Japan, and it is a service that we should extend to the oppressed people of Afghanistan as well. Unlike 19th-century European colonialists, we would not aim to impose our rule permanently. Instead, as in Western Germany, Italy, and Japan, occupation would be a temporary expedient to allow the people to get back on their feet until a responsible, humane, preferably democratic, government takes over.

Then there is Iraq. Saddam Hussein is a despised figure whose people rose up in rebellion in 1991 when given the opportunity to do so by American military victories. But the first Bush administration refused to go to Baghdad, and stood by as Saddam crushed the Shiite and Kurdish rebellions. As a shameful moment in U.S. history, the abandonment of these anti-Saddam rebels ranks right up there with our abandonment of the South Vietnamese in 1975. We now have an opportunity to rectify this historic mistake.

The debate about whether Saddam Hussein was implicated in the September 11 attacks misses the point. Who cares if Saddam was involved in this particular barbarity? He has been involved in so many barbarities over the years—from gassing the Kurds to raping the Kuwaitis—that he has already earned himself a death sentence a thousand times over. But it is not just a matter of justice to depose Saddam. It is a matter of self defense: He is currently working to acquire weapons of mass destruction that he or his confederates will unleash against America and our allies if given the chance.

Once Afghanistan has been dealt with, America should turn its attention to Iraq. It will probably not be possible to remove Saddam quickly without a U.S. invasion and occupation—though it will hardly require half a million men, since Saddam's army is much diminished since the Gulf War, and we will probably have plenty of help from Iraqis, once they trust that we intend to finish the job this time. Once we have deposed Saddam, we can impose an American-led, international regency in Baghdad, to go along with the one in Kabul. With American seriousness and credibility thus restored, we will enjoy fruitful cooperation from the region's many opportunists, who will show a newfound eagerness to be helpful in our larger task of rolling up the international terror network that threatens us.

Over the years, America has earned opprobrium in the Arab world for its realpolitik backing of repressive dictators like Hosni Mubarak and the Saudi royal family. This could be the chance to right the scales, to establish the first Arab democracy, and to show the Arab people that America is as committed to freedom for them as we were for the people of Eastern Europe. To turn Iraq into a beacon of hope for the oppressed peoples of the Middle East: Now that would be a historic war aim.

Is this an ambitious agenda? Without a doubt. Does America have the resources to carry it out? Also without a doubt. Does America have the will? That is an open question. But who, on December 6, 1941, would have expected that in four years' time America would not only roll back German and Japanese aggression, but also occupy Tokyo and Berlin and impose liberal democracy where dictators had long held sway? And fewer American lives were lost on December 7, 1941, than on September 11, 2001.

"With respect to the nature of the regime in Afghanistan, that is not uppermost in our minds right now," Secretary of State Colin Powell recently said. If not uppermost, though, it certainly should be on our minds. Long before British and American armies had returned to the continent of Europe—even before America had entered the struggle against Germany and Japan—Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt met on a battleship in the North Atlantic to plan the shape of the postwar world. The Atlantic Charter of August 14, 1941, pledged Britain and America to creating a liberal world order based on peace and national self-determination. The leaders of America, and of the West, should be making similar plans today.

Once they do, they will see that ambitious goals—such as "regime change"—are also the most realistic. Occupying Iraq and Afghanistan will hardly end the "war on terrorism," but it beats the alternatives. Killing bin Laden is important and necessary; but it is not enough. New bin Ladens could rise up to take his place. We must not only wipe out the vipers but also destroy their nest and do our best to prevent new nests from being built there again. ♦

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Look Who's Waving the Flag Now

As Democrats rediscover patriotism, the anti-American left sulks.

By Noemie Emery

The events of September 11 in New York and at the Pentagon fell like an axe across old political groupings, threatening alliances of many years standing, as people realized, perhaps for the first time, how strange their bedfellows were. Conservatives discovered that there are other conservatives who think the worst thing about war is that it spends money, and tends to grow government. Liberals found that there are other liberals who think the worst thing about war is . . . the flag.

On Sunday, September 30, the *New York Times* ran three different attacks on Old Glory as being somehow oppressive and sinister. On the op-ed page, there was Maureen Dowd accusing George W. Bush of "playing the flag card" to curb free expression. In the magazine, George Packer explained why the flag wasn't displayed in his liberal household: "Display wasn't just politically suspect, it was simply bad taste, sentimental, primitive, sometimes aggressive." And on page one of the opinion section, Blaine Harden explored the dark side of patriotism, of which "the flag, as much as any symbol, embodies the paradox . . . constitutional rights, which supposedly form the core of patriotism's appeal, suddenly lost ground to fear." None of this was the view of the Democratic political classes, which were out waving flags with the best of them.

The war has revealed the deep split in the party between the patriotic and the patronizing, between the large body of elected officials (and those who vote for them) and the noisy group of chattering asses who are elected by no one, and spend their time talking. The first group define themselves by their policies; they love their own country, and argue with conservatives about the best ways to bring the good life to more people. The second group may share these policy views, but they define themselves largely by attitude, which is adversarial. They distrust their country, detest conservatives, but detest most of all the tastes of the masses whose interests they claim to protect.

This schism is of long standing. In his indispensable *Our Country*, Michael Barone traces its origins back to the Adlai Stevenson campaign of 1956. Stevenson had run in 1952 as a traditional Democrat, upbeat and chipper. But when he lost, he began to think he was too good for the country, a theory his more intense fans would readily agree with. "Stevenson was the first leading Democratic politician to become a critic rather than a celebrator of middle-class American culture," Barone writes—"the prototype of the liberal Democrat who would judge ordinary Americans by an abstract standard and find them wanting. . . . When a woman assured him that all thinking people were for him, he responded, 'Yes, but I need to win a majority.' . . . It is unthinkable that Franklin Roosevelt would have ever said those things, or that those thoughts would have ever crossed his mind." Stevenson was not brighter than Eisenhower, just more ironic; and he read much less than did his future rival, John Kennedy. But to the horde of independent minds that clustered around him, his losses had given him the appeal of a martyr, if not of a saint. As Barone writes, "What was attractive to them was not his platform, but his attitude—his irony, his skepticism, his critical detachment from the roaring course of American life. . . . They sought from the seemingly diffident Stevenson not so much changes of public policy, but a validation of their own cultural stance."

Stevenson was beaten by Ike, and four years later, by the more red-blooded appeal of Kennedy; but in 1968 the losing primary campaign of Eugene McCarthy, a man still more educated, more remote, and more cold-blooded than Stevenson, established the model of the outsider as the emotional template for a generation of liberals who defined themselves by their opposition to middle-class values and tastes. The culture itself, from which all else flowed, had begun to seem sinister. In her recent book *Inventing Herself*,

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

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Elaine Showalter gives us this glowing account of the young Susan Sontag: "The ordinary details of American life . . . drove her crazy; led her to grind her teeth, twirl her hair, bite her nails, overeat. Especially popular culture. 'The weekly comedy shows festooned with canned laughter, the treacly Hit Parade, the hysterical narratings of baseball games and prize fights . . . were an endless torment.' Later, she would attach the same feelings of exasperation to television—unless it was French."

What a nice touch this last is. It was of course no surprise that days after the attack by the terrorists Sontag was one of the first to denounce this country as "stupid," and to complain that one of the sources of trouble was that America had too much power in the world. Similarly, Packer would state in his Sunday piece for the *Times*, "My wariness of the flag was [not] just a matter of political values. It was also a matter of culture and class. The flag was waved mainly by working-class people for whom loyalty to the family, the tribe, and nation hadn't been eroded by the pressure of middle-class ambition and self-conscious sophistication." Radicalism may have been chic, but patriotism clearly had no cachet whatsoever: "My family would sooner have upholstered the furniture in orange corduroy than show the colors on Memorial Day."

Professors still rant, but fewer students are listening. Even Berkeley itself, once protest central, appears to have had second thoughts.

The worst post-attack display of this type of class hatred came in *New York* magazine. Michael Wolf lashed out at the "redneck" states and their president, and praised his city for being as un-American as humanly possible. "As any New Yorker knows, New York isn't really American. It is, as well, of course, the world's greatest Jewish city—who can doubt this was not a part of the message here?" One doubts this is what Senator Schumer—or any elected liberal in New York politics—was thinking. In the same magazine, one Mark Jacobson said he was "conflicted" about raising the flag; and didn't care much who got himself killed in Virginia. "If those lunatics want to fly a plane into the Pentagon, let Bush put up his magic shield."

The *Times*men never quite reached these heights of expression, but they still seemed to be searching for something to blame on the country. After the attacks, as Harden informs us, "a nationalistic undertow that is culturally conformist, ethnically exclusive, and belligerently militaristic began to silence dissent, spread fear among immigrants, and lock up people without explanation." Oh? Just when did this happen? When the two Presidents Bush, many cabinet members, mayors and governors and members of Congress urged Americans not to harass the Muslims among them? Ethnic exclusivity? When the prayer services at Yankee Stadium and the National Cathedral in Washington were loaded with and conducted by people of every religion and every ethnic group known to man? Belligerent militancy? Bush has drawn praise, mainly from Democrats, for the restraint and precision with which he is planning his moves. Silencing dissent?

Let us closely examine our small reign of terror and see what has really gone on. Journalists have failed to worship the ground on which Sontag walks. A cheesy late-night TV comedian lost two of his sponsors; he is still on the air. Two small-town journalists lost their jobs after alienating large numbers of readers. Other journalists who received angry letters have not lost their jobs, and were criticized less for their critiques of Bush—who was justly described as not having been good in his early public appearances—than for the sneering tones in which they had often described him, which now seemed less than funny. A history professor at the University of New Mexico was disciplined after he said to one of his classes, "Anyone who can blow up the Pentagon has my vote." At the time, the building was the tomb of nearly 200 people; he was seen as having rejoiced at the deaths of his countrymen. Fortunately, he had the good sense to see this, and quickly apologized, saying, correctly, "I was simply being at the moment an incredibly insensitive and unfeeling jerk."

And so, something new is beginning to happen: The softer fringe of the attitude party is starting to peel itself off. Tentatively, slowly, some are allowing themselves now to feel warm toward their country, embarrassed though they may be by these primordial feelings. E.J. Dionne gives his fellow "progressives" permission to back the war effort, distrustful as they may be of its leadership. The *New York Times* is not irredeemable; columnist Thomas Friedman is now a full-throated hawk and patriot. Some will admit, though they won't fly flags themselves, that they rather like seeing the others'. "As the flags bloomed like flowers, I found they tapped emotions," George Packer admitted. "To me, those flags didn't represent flabby complacence, but alertness, grief, resolve, even love." Professors still rant, but fewer students are listening. Even Berkeley itself, once protest central, appears to have had second thoughts. As the *Washington Times* reported, "By far the largest campus gathering since the attacks was a September 17th memorial service for the victims that drew 12,000 students. The night of the attacks about 500

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students staged a spontaneous candlelight vigil . . . the largest anti-retaliation demonstration drew 2,500 students out of a campus total of more than 32,000. It was followed the next day by an almost equally large 'Rally for America.' On September 24, pro-U.S. demonstrators rallied again, shouting 'USA, USA,' perhaps the first time that chant had been heard in the heart of American dissidence. . . . So far, this time, not a single flag has been burned."

When anti-globalization activists tried to switch tracks into anti-American rallies, they found themselves deserted by their most powerful allies. As John Sweeney, head of the AFL-CIO, firmly stated, "We deplore the assault, and we stand fully behind the leadership in this time of national crisis." He urged his members to collect funds to aid victims' families. In Congress, domestic liberals are discovering their inner hawk.

In the long war for the soul of national Democrats, the tide seems to be swinging back in the direction of Truman and Kennedy—veterans, patriots, and ardent Cold Warriors who had no patience at all with moral equivalence. At the same time, George W. Bush is becoming a president rather like Truman and Kennedy, an energetic defender of national interests, who knows that domestic divides must take second place to his primary purpose of leading a nation and a world at war. If this means an alliance with labor on some things, then so be it, as labor may soon stand with him. The Democrats are purging themselves of the virus of nihilism, and the hard left is isolating itself.

A healthy skepticism about the uses of power is always in order, but a smartass contempt for one's country and one's fellow citizens is something quite different. Most Democrats now get this; some students are learning. And one day, it may dawn on the chattering class. ♦

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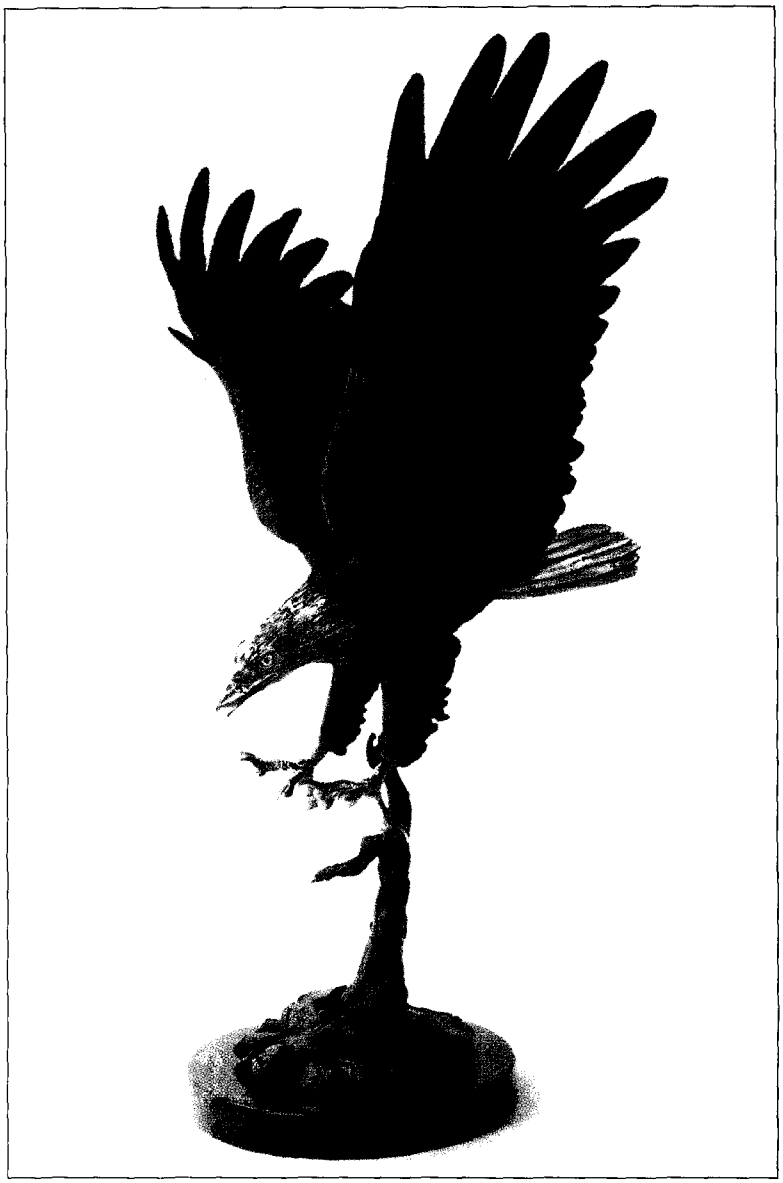

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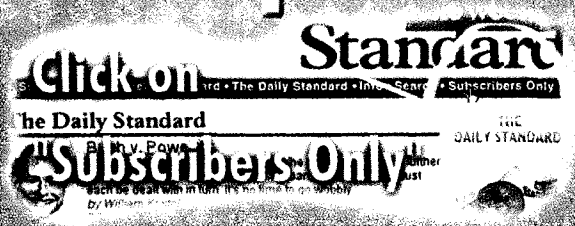

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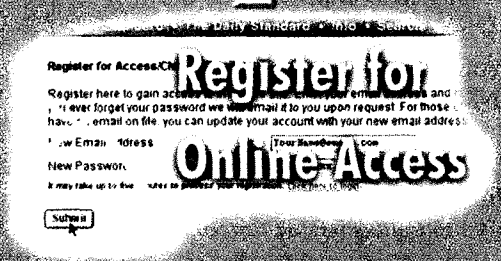

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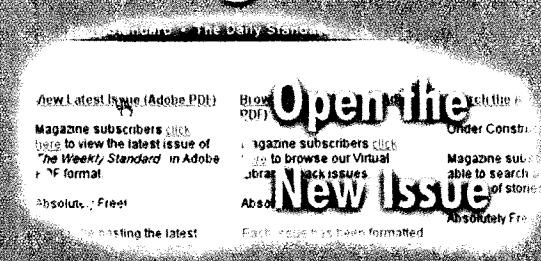

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Ackroyd's Guide to London

An idiosyncratic walk through a new-old city

By Hugh Ormsby-Lennon

Big Ben, c. 1912. All photos: Hulton / Archive.

To American tourists, standing in line at the Tower or Westminster Abbey, London seems an old city, enveloped in architectural and historical atmosphere. In fact, next to nothing survives of the Romans' London—or Chaucer's, or Shakespeare's.

Unlike many other English and European cities, the London that exists today is a creation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It simply *feels* older than that, and to understand why one needs to delve into its archives, digest its great (and not so great) writers, and lose oneself in its streets—all of which Peter Ackroyd has done in *London: The Biography*, his marvelous depiction of the life of a long-lived city.

Ackroyd is a major novelist and biographer who has specialized in the imaginative recreations of London that he calls "hauntings." In his 1993 novel *The House of Dr. Dee*, he imagined a twentieth-century historian who discovers that he has inherited the house of John Dee, the Elizabethan alchemist and astrologer, in Clerkenwell, an out-of-the-way neighborhood that becomes a character in its own right. In his 1996 biography of William Blake, Ackroyd celebrates Blake as Londoner and mystic in what is perhaps his finest nonfiction investigation of a writer and his relation to England's capital. What unites his fiction and nonfiction is Ackroyd's commitment to "playing around with the idea of time."

Ackroyd has also retraced the footsteps of Sir Thomas More, Charles Dickens, and T.S. Eliot—three more Londoners about whom he has written first-rate biographies, and this has given him a remarkable inwardness with London across time. He has also followed his own fanciful nose wherever it leads (often into areas like Clerkenwell or the East End that are untrodden to tourists). The results can also be enjoyed in novels like *Hawksmoor* and *The Trial of Elizabeth Cree: A Novel of the Limehouse Murders*, two esoteric tales about death and sexual transgression. "The kind of people I tend to write about, magicians, occultists, mystics, visionaries," Ackroyd has observed, are "almost as important as the palpable presence of the city."

London
The Biography
by Peter Ackroyd
Doubleday, 864 pp., $45

Now, at last, in *London: The Biography*, Ackroyd has let the city itself be the main character. The book is not a typically chronological canter through the capital's history. To be sure, Ackroyd follows a broad time-line from London's geological foundations to "the silver cladding and curved glass walls" of the twentieth-century Docklands, making all the major stops and plenty of unfamiliar ones. This Christmas pudding of a book is served up (unlike some of his novels) in a readably plain style. But *London: The Biography* has exasperated some reviewers.

Hugh Ormsby-Lennon teaches eighteenth-century English literature at Villanova University.

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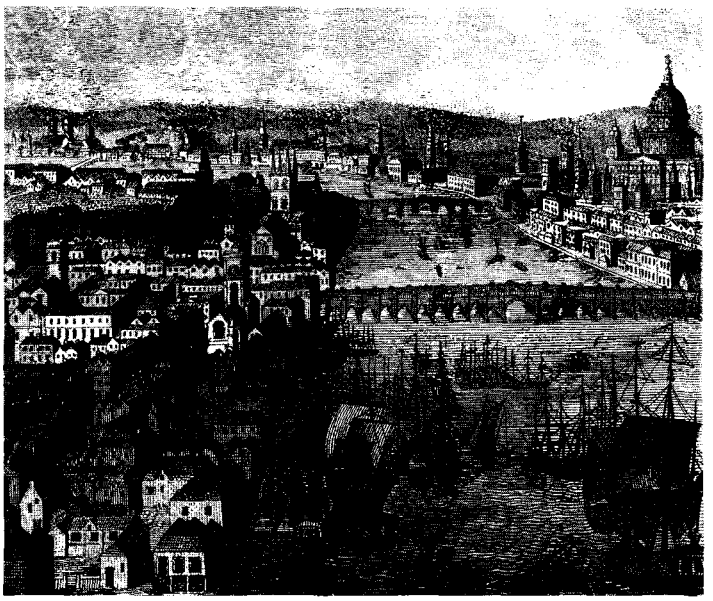

Left: A view of London from the Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493. Center: The city in 1783.

If it's not a history or a bedside book or an anthology, then what is it? The subtitle—cute, lapel-grabbing, and artfully honest—provides readers with their first clue.

Ackroyd is often tempted by "psychogeography," the magico-mystical notion that England's capital was first (and still may be) organized around the sacred hills and wells from which ancient Celts and their shadowy predecessors channeled chthonic forces. "It is a strange city beneath the ground," Ackroyd muses of London's Tube, sewers, subterranean rivers, and legendary troglodytes, "perhaps best exemplified by worn manhole covers which, instead of reading SELF LOCKING, spell out ELF KING."

Deeply Catholic in his sympathies, Ackroyd celebrates Cockneys as the ebullient preservers of a Catholic culture that was forcibly extirpated during the Reformation. Expanding upon his own devotion to "pantomime and masquerade," to conjuring and magic lanterns, to puppet shows and camp humor, Ackroyd maps London's inner life. "I believe I am describing London in almost a religious sense," Ackroyd has remarked, but adds that he "cannot be sure what particular religion it is." His Catholicism certainly comes with a large dash of paganism, both plebeian and arcane.

Ackroyd doesn't seem to care that most of London is, physically, no more than three hundred years old. Nor does he worry overly about twentieth-century changes in skyline and streetscape. Instead Ackroyd responds to a London that survives in the spirit and in language. London is a "palimpsest"—a partially erased manuscript—which he exults in decrypting. In *London: The Biography* there are speculations galore (and no footnotes whatsoever), but some readers will feel that Ackroyd has plucked out the heart of London's mystery, if not of its palpable presence, more successfully than more punctilious historians.

Personal disclosure comes during a touching evocation of Fountain Court in the Middle Temple, one of the four Inns of Court. "One Londoner came here as a schoolboy, with no knowledge of its history or associations," Ackroyd recalls of his first sight of its small, serene fountain that is three hundred years old and commemorated by writers as diverse as Dickens and Verlaine. Innocent of its history and literary associations, that schoolboy "immediately fell under the spell of its enchantment. At last, in these pages, he has the chance of recording his debt." Then autobiography promptly segues into psychogeography.

"If persistence through time can create harmony and charity," Ackroyd continues, "then the church of St. Bride's—only a few yards from Fountain Court—has some claim to good fortune." Within the grounds of Christopher Wren's great church—whose steeple inspired the traditional design for the wedding cake—have been found a prehistoric ritual site and evidence of a Roman temple and of a Saxon church in wood. "So the various forms of divinity have been venerated on one spot for many thousands of years," Ackroyd concludes in benediction. "London is blessed as well as cursed."

In an interview, Ackroyd has equivocated about "the sacred geography of Druidic sites" around which he perambulates in *London: The Biography*: "I take it with a slight pinch of salt. I'm not a zealot of New Age interests; ley lines I can take or leave. But certainly such elements tend towards a powerful presence." In fact, Ackroyd sprinkles his salt selectively. Whenever anyone tries to identify the first Londoners, things get tricky, and normal biogra-

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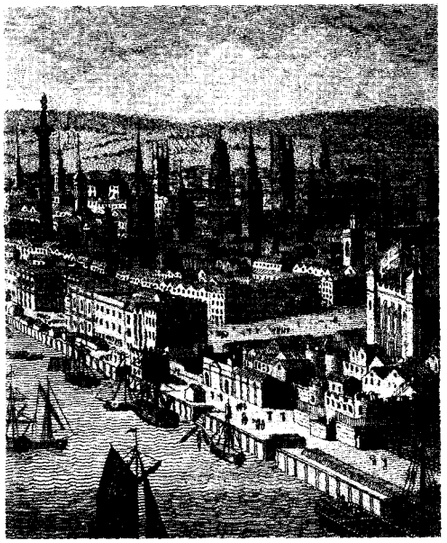

Right: Traffic on Oxford Street in 1890. Below: The Great Fire of 1666.

phers who can't locate the birth of their subject within a few decades are in serious trouble. But few chroniclers of London, at least since the Middle Ages, have proved as exuberant or cavalier as Ackroyd.

Evidence for a Celtic settlement proves elusive, but "London" itself intimates a true Celtic etymology. Ackroyd may not be a zealot, but he is an enthusiast. At the outset of *London: The Biography*, he parades the possible etymologies for the town's name: "the stronghold by the stream," "long hill," "marsh," "fierce" ("intriguing, given the reputation for violence which Londoners were later to acquire"), and that gnarled chestnut "King Lud's *dun* (or city)." Too smart to place his bets, Ackroyd merely regrets that "those of skeptical cast of mind may be inclined to dismiss such narratives" even though "the legends of a thousand years may contain profound and particular truths."

Indeed, Ackroyd maintains that "the wrong etymology is often accurate about the nature of an area." This is Humpty Dumpty's theory of language in which words can mean anything you want them to mean. "That existing street names may betray a Celtic origin" is for Ackroyd "as instructive as any of the material 'finds' recorded on the site of the ancient city." This way madness and New Age tourism lie. Loopy about etymology and topography, Ackroyd can make it up as he goes along. What proves most interesting about "the tall and glittering Lloyd's Building" (London's niftiest skyscraper) is the fact that it was erected on the site of a medieval maypole that overshadowed church steeples.

In an interview, Ackroyd readily conceded that this conjunction of maypole and skyscraper is "quite coincidental, obviously, in many respects"—"it has nothing to do with ley lines, nothing to do with any of that"—but again he hammered home his case that London manifests "a topographical power, a topographical spirit" that springs from "what happens on any one spot over and over again."

Still, while psychogeography provides *London: The Biography* with its leitmotif, Ackroyd manages much more. With a keen eye for popular culture—from children's street games to the mayhem surrounding public executions—he provides lively vignettes of Londoners at work and play. Most unmystical readers will be charmed. When he goes off the deep end, he makes a splash of it, but he gets the vast majority of his mundane facts right. From dining out and the sexual underworld to the Great Fire and the Blitz, it's all here, more or less. Studiously attentive to the voices of earlier commentators on London, Ackroyd provides a cornucopia of snippets, often unfamiliar, from the tomes of antiquaries: *The Rookeries of London*, *The Quacks of Old London*, *The London Nobody Knows*.

"London has always been a great ocean in which survival is not certain," Ackroyd observes at the outset of his narrative, when he descries fossilized starfish and sea urchins in the plinth of Charles I's statue at Charing Cross. Later he speaks of London's "wave-like" quality, of the tidal "suck and throw" of its history. "London is a labyrinth, half of stone and half of flesh," that "defies chronology" and in which, as in *London: The Biography*, we "must wander and wonder."

"The crowd is not a single entity, manifesting itself on particular occasions," Ackroyd assures us, "but the actual condition of London itself." When he declares that "the crowd encourages solitude, as well as secrecy and anxiety," we can appreciate the haven which he found, as a schoolboy, in Fountain Court. London resembles a newspaper in which, as Walter Bagehot, early editor of the *Economist*, observed, "everything is there, and everything is disconnected." Employing the same metaphor, the novelist Ford Madox Ford avers that "connected thinking has become nearly impossible," but adds that one still has to "know the news, in order to be a fit companion for one's fellow Londoner." Ackroyd is adept at melding his own choice of metaphors with their use by his predecessors.

Familiar Dickensian fogs are traced hither and yon: "The fog that Tacitus described in the first century still hov-

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ers over London." By now, petrochemical smog has replaced toxic industries and coal-burning fireplaces. London becomes George Orwell's "city of the dead," and "of all cities" Ackroyd concurs that "London seems most occupied by its dead." And Rome? Ackroyd ripostes in the words of the novelist George Gissing: "London by night! Rome is poor by comparison." Ackroyd pounds London's nocturnal pavements, listening to the voices of the dead and deciphering topographical spirits from manhole covers.

Normal biographies have beginnings, middles, and ends—just as people's lives do. The problem with London is that it's all middle. The city has endured and survived its countless obituarists. They have died; London hasn't. Even Stephen Inwood, whose excellent *History of London* (1998) is longer than *London: The Biography*, confessed in a lecture several months ago that the metropolis proves too big to squeeze between the covers of a history book.

So what is a historian to do? One solution is to write *London: The Biography*. Peter Ackroyd can pull things off that historians normally can't. The London of Bagehot and Ford may rebuff connections, but psychogeography encourages them. Ackroyd's discussion of Cockney speech takes us from Shakespeare's Mistress Quickly to Dickens's Sarah Gamp and Shaw's Eliza Doolittle in the twinkling it takes to turn the page. The word "Cockney," he explains, comes from "a cock's egg," a freak of nature; or perhaps it derives from *coquina*, a Latin word for cookery, thanks to London's cook-shops; or, inevitably, it may come from "the Celtic myth of London as 'Cockaigne,' a place of milk and honey." Such etymologies can't all be right, but Ackroyd conflates them with panache.

American tourists may never visit Clerkenwell, but sense intuitively that London is unaccountably older than much of its physical appearance. Most will pick up lightweight guidebooks rather than *London: The Biography*, but Ackroyd captures their inchoate feelings that there is more to London than meets the eye. ♦

Clintonites Abroad

Neither the best nor the brightest.

BY TOM DONNELLY

The story of America's foreign policy during the years of Bill Clinton will be of considerable interest to historians. The United States, having won a stunning and surprising victory in the Cold War, emerges as the most powerful, prosperous, and politically attractive nation on the planet. It elects an extraordinarily gifted politician as its leader, a man of rural roots and elite education, the first president to represent the American generation that regards itself as uniquely enlightened and morally aware. For that president's every talent and accomplishment, there is an equally large weakness. He dominates his courtiers as thoroughly as any French king, Ottoman sultan, or Roman caesar ever did. His wife wields magnificent power as ruthlessly as Livia or Lady Macbeth.

War in a Time of Peace
Bush, Clinton, and the Generals
by David Halberstam
Scribner, 544 pp., $28

This is a tale that would need a Thucydides or Suetonius to narrate its events, and a Tolstoy or Dickens to describe its personalities. And despite the change of administrations, the line from Bush I to Clinton to Bush II has a dramatic sweep, a symmetrical geometry, and it is a story we are still living. Indeed, the terrorist attacks of September 11 show more starkly the continuities of American history after the Cold War.

So perhaps David Halberstam is to be respected simply for attempting in *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals* to piece together the pattern of American foreign policy during the 1990s. Self-consciously following the formula of *The Best and the Brightest*, his hugely successful book that has established itself as the standard account of policy-making during the Vietnam years, Halberstam is again intending to write the first draft of history during the Clinton years, with Bush I as prelude and Bush II as a brief postscript.

Yet *War in a Time of Peace* proves, in the event, not so much a first draft as an incomplete draft. Halberstam contents himself with an analysis that never rises above conventional wisdom—and that conventional wisdom never gets very far from midtown Manhattan. This is the establishment liberal's view of the world as seen from New York City.

Worse, Halberstam contents himself with a framework that seeks to explain every aspect of Clinton's foreign policy in terms of domestic politics. While it may be true that, as Halberstam writes, "foreign policy was getting only the most marginal attention," especially in the first months of Clinton's presidency, the rest of the world had an annoying habit of intruding on the administration's priorities.

The first of the troubles began in Somalia, a mission inherited from the previous administration. Halberstam's treatment of the issue reflects the book's problems in a nutshell. After a good summary of Somalia's internal struggles prior to the intervention of U.S. troops in 1992, Halberstam then opts for the still-popular idea that the Clinton administration allowed "mission creep" to expand the American role there from a strictly humanitarian one to a doomed attempt at "nation-building."

Tom Donnelly is deputy executive director of the Project for the New American Century.

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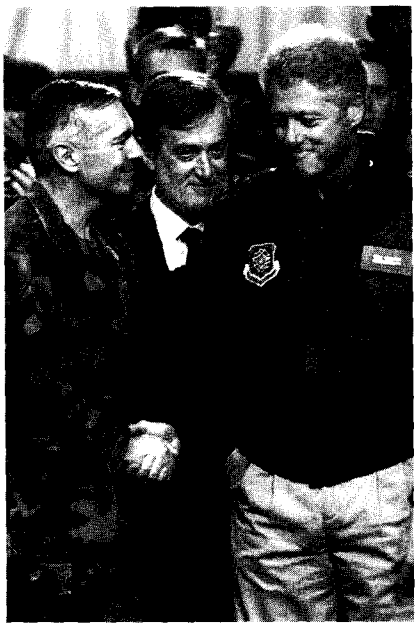

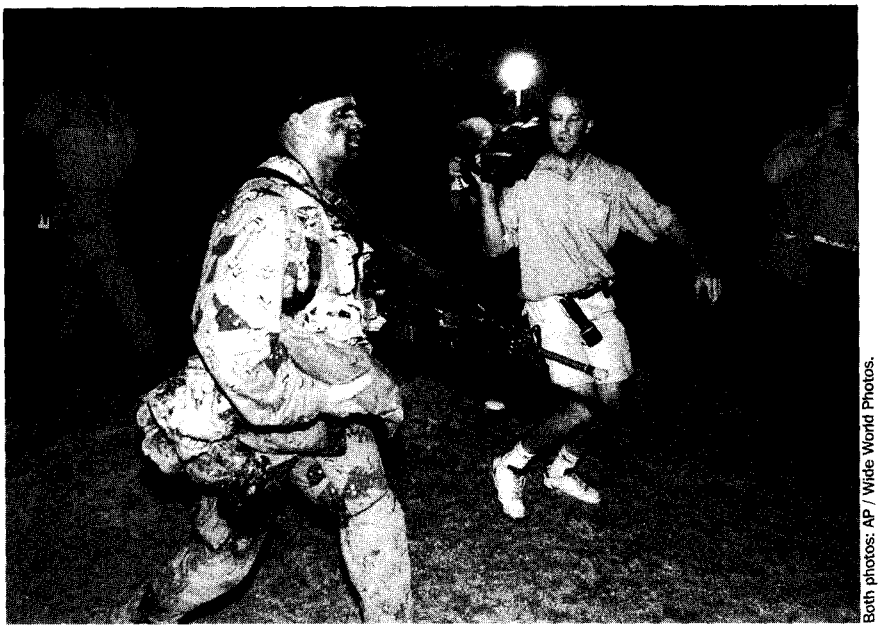

Both photos: AP / Wide World Photos.

Left: General Wesley Clark shaking hands with President Clinton. Right: U.S. forces arriving in Mogadishu, December 9, 1992.

Whatever the failures of Somali government and society, we were foolish ever to imagine that we might dispense aid and preserve neutrality in a war where food was being used as a weapon. And blaming the resulting mess on Boutros Boutros-Ghali's deep hatred of Somali clan leader Mohammed Farah Aideed—the Clinton administration's excuse, accepted wholeheartedly by Halberstam—is deeply misleading.

A blind spot exists for those who look at the world this way, and they are most of America's foreign-policy community over the past decade. Because we have survived the Cold War, most of today's troubles seem to amount to nothing more than "teacup wars," a phrase used often by Leslie Gelb and quoted approvingly by Halberstam.

It is as though, in the absence of a competition between great nations, foreign-policy observers have trouble discerning the struggles for power that continue to shape international politics. Instead, these shadowy new conflicts arise with "rogue states" and "warlords" and "ethnic cleansers" and now international terrorists.

Even if, as Halberstam would have it, the Vietnam experience was the principal factor shaping Bill Clinton's understanding of America's role in the world, that doesn't mean Halberstam himself has to share it. The narrative as well as the analysis of *War in a Time of Peace* is spotty. Halberstam concentrates on Somalia and the Balkans, with almost nothing to say about Iraq, and little to say about China. Clinton, after all, inherited an unfinished war against Saddam Hussein; the story of the zigs, zags, and retreats—all the while pretending that Iraq was safely contained in its "box"—is one of the central and continuing themes of American foreign policy over the past decade. And the rise of China almost certainly marks the greatest geopolitical struggle for the coming century. Halberstam takes passing note of Bill Clinton's "butchers of Beijing" rhetoric in the 1992 campaign and the subsequent appeasement of the Chinese, but not much more.

Finally, the subtitle's promise to discuss "the generals" is only partially fulfilled. Halberstam does outline the heightened role played by uniformed leaders in U.S. foreign policy and decision-making, but he offers no broad analysis of the state of civil-military relations or what accounted for the growing tensions between soldiers and statesmen throughout the 1990s. And what there is tends to overemphasize insubordination while underplaying the institutional pressures faced by the military and exacerbated by the budgetary politics and policy choices of the post-Cold War era.

For all these faults, Halberstam still can be a very good reporter, and there are nuggets that do shine through. He manages, for example, to paint a nuanced portrait of General Wesley Clark in Kosovo. Clark is a complex figure, hated and admired in equal measure, and Halberstam manages to show the general's strengths and shortcomings well, all without disrupting the larger story. Similarly, he shines a light on the tortured character of former national security adviser Anthony Lake—a man with a long-running rivalry and friendship with the energetic Richard Holbrooke.

But in the end, *War in a Time of Peace* does not reach the level of *The Best and the Brightest*. As the final chapters rush through the last Clinton years and the election of George W. Bush, Halberstam seems to have thrown in the towel. And, to be fair, the story's not over—American foreign policy remains a muddle.

If America's role in the world has proved a puzzle to three presidents, perhaps David Halberstam should be forgiven his own confusion. ♦

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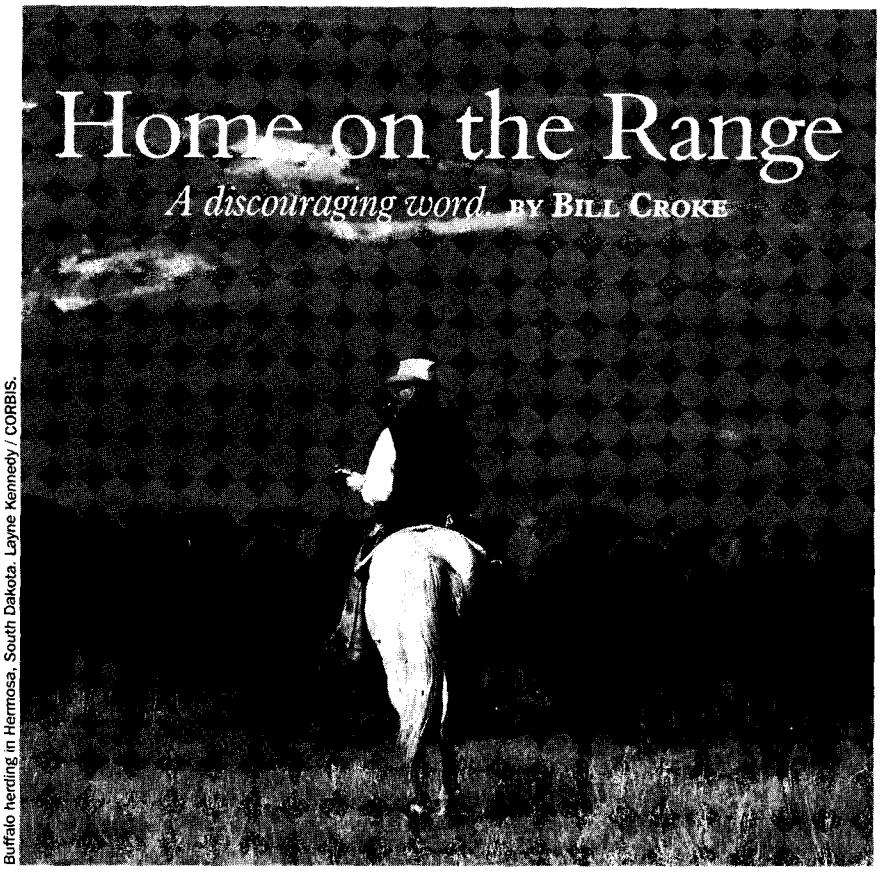
Home on the Range

A discouraging word. BY BILL CROKE



Buffalo herding in Hermosa, South Dakota. Layne Kennedy / CORBIS.

The Great Plains are a wreck. In a northward swath from western Kansas to eastern Montana, birth rates have plunged, towns are dying, schools and stores are closing. The landscape is dotted with empty farmhouses, broken fences, and boarded-up churches, the paint peeling in the relentless prairie wind. The plains, of course, have always been unforgiving, but this is new. And so the report Dan O'Brien gives in his new nonfiction account *Buffalo for the Broken Heart* is a different story from the old reports given by writers from Willa Cather and Walter Prescott Webb to Wright Morris, Mari Sandoz, and Jonathan Raban.

Buffalo For the Broken Heart
Restoring Life to a Black Hills Ranch
by Dan O'Brien
Random House, 254 pp., $22.95

The Broken Heart, the name of O'Brien's thousand-acre ranch near Whitewood, South Dakota, on the eastern slope of the Black Hills, is an apt metaphor for the contemporary Great Plains. Like his neighbors, O'Brien—a self-described environmentalist, a rancher, and the author of eight previous books—has had his share of hard times thanks to low cattle prices and the vagaries of weather. Running the Broken Heart has been a labor of love, and several times over the last twenty years O'Brien has been forced to leave its daily maintenance to a hired man named Erney Hersman, taking temporary teaching jobs and working on his books to pay the mortgage.

Some of O'Brien's neighbors have made the change from cattle to bison, and after helping one of those neighbors with a typically tricky roundup, O'Brien ended up buying thirteen rust-colored calves. Hersman whimsically named the calves the "Gashouse Gang," and O'Brien was in the buffalo business. Always on good terms with his local banker, he went into $100,000 of debt as he and Hersman built an elaborate eight miles of heavy duty six-strand fence eight-feet tall, and he added to his herd after trips to auctions in Colorado and Utah. He soon had a herd of fifty-one bison on his place in a constantly shifting forage, like a cloud shadow slowly dragging over the prairie.

O'Brien began to notice a steady improvement of the range over what it was in his cattle days. Unlike cattle, bison are selective grazers. They lightly crop the range, trimming the western wheatgrass, bluestem, grama, and buffalo grass, and move on. Cattle—unless moved from pasture to pasture—will graze the range down to the dirt. In creek and river bottoms, buffalo will stop to drink and then once more move onto the range. Cattle will graze to the water's edge and then eat the young willow and cottonwood. In hot weather, cattle will stand for hours in a creek, muddying it and fouling it. When bison seek to escape the heat and flies, they roll on their backs and create "buffalo wallows": shallow wetland-ponds or waterholes that draw other wildlife. O'Brien writes:

> And that is when I figured out the problem with cows. It's not that there is anything wrong with them in general. It's just that out here on the Great Plains, they seem painted on the landscape in a way that will never allow them to be truly part of it. They have always been a sort of ungulate tourist, and in ranching them I felt a little like a tour guide who spends his life translating menus and pointing out the restrooms.

Buffalo don't need the hay in winter that cattle require; they use their massive heads to sweep away deep snow and get at the grass. And buffalo don't need to be watered in winter. When creeks and stock ponds are frozen they take what moisture they need from the snow while foraging. In the hard winter of 1997, sixty thousand cattle and sheep perished on the northern plains. Only one buffalo died, hit by a semi-truck while crossing a highway.

Today, 250,000 commercially raised buffalo roam the plains. They are valued for their nutritional strong points of high protein and low cholesterol and fat. They don't need the attention of

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veterinarians as much as cattle, and they don't need to be feedlot-marketed. (O'Brien slaughters his own quota every fall by shooting them at close range with a county meat inspector present, and thus markets his own as "organic" bison.) Some of these buffalo are merely the playthings of the wealthy; Ted Turner owns massive herds, for example. The rest are owned by environmentally conscious and entrepreneurially minded ranchers, such as O'Brien, tired of long days and financial struggle in "a place that by its nature shrugs off puny human notions of power."

O'Brien points out the well-known fact that these quarter million bison once numbered sixty million and were the larder of large tribes of people. In their two-hundred-year heyday, from the introduction of the horse around 1680 to the closing of the open plains around 1876, the tribes of the Great Plains enjoyed a unique prosperity—considering that they were essentially a stone-age culture. Birth rates rose and lifespans lengthened; mobility increased, allowing more opportunities for trade; even the average size of teepees grew, allowing space for those bigger families, and their accumulated wealth. (The costs of all this were overworked squaws forced to maintain the prosperity and constant nomadism, and a rising death rate among young men from war as the tribes crowded each other in the prime hunting grounds.)

The need to destroy these wild herds was an inevitable consequence of the American government's decision to force the recalcitrant plains tribes onto reservations in the late nineteenth century. The last recorded killing of a wild bison was of a lone bull near the Cannonball River in North Dakota in 1883. After that, a few hundred survived as pets on ranches, and Yellowstone National Park began to develop a herd that numbers roughly three thousand today. In thirty-five years, sixty million buffalo were exterminated on the Great Plains.

To attract settlers to the emptied plains, 160-acre homestead tracts were offered by the government for the price of a small filing fee and the promise to "prove up" by making at least minor improvements to the land. This was a nod to the Jeffersonian vision of an agrarian republic of virtuous, hard-working farmers, but the reality of life on the Great Plains soon exposed this ideal as a fantasy. Washington bureaucrats and railroad executives imagined that the plains could be ranched and farmed with the proved agricultural practices of the eastern United States. The warnings of people in the know—such as explorer and surveyor John Wesley Powell—fell on deaf ears.

The consequent land rush populated the Great Plains with thousands of immigrants, mostly from northern Europe. They believed absurd railroad propaganda such as "Rain follows the plow," a bold bit of nineteenth-century junk science that claimed that large tracts of cultivated land actually changed weather patterns. The simple fact is that west of the hundredth meridian (a line that neatly bisects the Dakotas, Nebraska, and states to the south) annual rainfall drops below twenty inches. The Great Plains are at least semi-arid and not fit for conventional agriculture without the benefit of irrigation. Even dryland crops like wheat and barley are a problem. Wallace Stegner once remarked that "to live successfully in the West, one must get over the idea of green."

A few wet, fat years in the early 1880s gave the sodbusters a false optimism that was finally smashed by the ferocious winter of 1886, which killed most of the domestic livestock on the northern plains. Hereford cattle ran in terror to exhaustion ahead of the screaming blizzards. The constitutionally spare Charolais stood whining in the snow until they froze. Hardier Black Angus fared better, but nothing like the few native bison that not only survived, but thrived. The cattle culture of the Great Plains has remained this same kind of boom-bust, government-subsidized crapshoot for over a century.

While riding around with a friend named Dick Saterlee, an eighty-year-old real-estate agent and retired rancher, O'Brien gains some insight into his region's problems. They visit a three-thousand-acre ranch on the White River that Saterlee may list for its elderly owner, a man—like a lot of other people—getting out because of "falling prices, rising expenses, same old Great Plains stuff." Dick Saterlee has bad news for this rancher who wants three hundred dollars an acre. It's not feasible to list it for more than two hundred. On the way back to town Saterlee says: "These are good people out here, . . . most honest people in the world. They wouldn't lie to you for anything. . . . But they'll lie to themselves every time."

Annie Griffiths Belt / CORBIS.

After three years in the buffalo business, Dan O'Brien's Broken Heart ranch is slowly getting on its feet. And on a clear day in Whitewood, South Dakota, you can see in the distance Bear Butte, the birthplace of Crazy Horse. ♦

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The Standard Reader

"Sad and Glad, The Bipolar Bears."

Sontagged

The first Susan Sontag Certificate—THE WEEKLY STANDARD's recognition of particular inanity by intellectuals and artists in the wake of the terrorist attacks—goes, of course, to Susan Sontag for her note in the Sept. 24 *New Yorker*. She managed in only 460 words to score every possible point. There was the shtick of deliberately saying the outrageous: "If the word 'cowardly' is to be used, it might be more aptly applied to those who kill from beyond the range of retaliation, high in the sky, than to those willing to die themselves in order to kill others." There was the moral equivalence, blaming both the attacked and the attackers: "How many citizens are aware of the ongoing American bombing of Iraq?" There was the willful obtuseness in moral reasoning: "courage (a morally neutral virtue)." And there was the use of the occasion to indulge old political grievances: "We have a robotic president."

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN: Sontag set a high standard. But for sheer outrageousness, the German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen topped her, calling the destruction of the World Trade Center "the greatest work of art imaginable.... You have people who are that focused on a performance and then 5,000 people are dispatched into the afterlife in a single moment.... By comparison, we composers are nothing." When the uproar in Germany over his remarks caused cancellations of his concerts, Stockhausen apologized, saying he had meant only that the terrorists had created works of "the devil's art."

NOAM CHOMSKY: It seems almost unfair to include MIT's Noam Chomsky, the linguistics theorist turned far-left activist, for he fell off the cliff into goofiness thirty years ago. But he has a fanatical readership among anti-globalization types, and he deserves recognition for a definitive formulation of moral equivalence—or rather, moral *in*equivalence, for America is much more to blame. "The terrorist attacks were major atrocities," he admitted. But "in scale they may not reach the level of many others, for example, Clinton's bombing of the Sudan."

Observing that Sept. 11 marked the first attack on the U.S. mainland since 1812, he noted that in the years between, America has "annihilated the indigenous population (millions of people), conquered half of Mexico, intervened violently in the surrounding region, conquered Hawaii and the Philippines (killing hundreds of thousands of Filipinos), and in the past half century particularly, extended its resort to force throughout much of the world. The number of victims is colossal. For the first time, the guns have been directed the other way."

ARUNDHATI ROY: Matching Chomsky is the novelist Arundhati Roy. In the British *Guardian*, she declared that Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush are actually the same person. The terrorist is "the American president's dark doppelgänger. The savage twin of all that purports to be beautiful and civilized. He has been sculpted from the spare rib of a world laid to waste by America's foreign policy: its gunboat diplomacy, its nuclear arsenal,... its chilling disregard for non-American lives, its barbarous military interventions, its support for despotic and dictatorial regimes, its merciless economic agenda that has munched through the economies of

Editor's Note: With this issue, THE WEEKLY STANDARD begins a new feature: THE STANDARD READER, a section of commentary on books, arts, and ideas. Week after week, under restrictions of space, we found ourselves forced to ignore events, books, and intellectual items deserving mockery or praise. Finally, we created this new section. It's here you'll find notes about the literary, intellectual, and academic worlds—together with short reviews, reading lists, brief encomiums, and quick defenestrations, to say nothing of the cartoons of Nick Downes. Why don't you join us? If you spot something about books or arts or academia that needs notice, send it to THE STANDARD READER, c/o THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, NW, Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036, or to *standardreader@weeklystandard.com*. Send us your reading lists fit for the season, your clippings of absurd reviews, and your observations of lines in new books and shows that need mentioning. —*J. Bottum, Books & Arts editor*

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poor countries like a cloud of locusts. Its marauding multinationals who are taking over the air we breathe, the ground we stand on, the water we drink, the thoughts we think." When the *New York Times* said Roy's *The God of Small Things* was "Dickensian in its sharp-eyed observation of society and character," this is probably not what it had in mind.

ALICE WALKER: Meanwhile, in the category of moral obtuseness, an honorable mention is claimed by Judith Rizzo, a deputy school chancellor in New York, who told the *Washington Post*: "Those people who said we don't need multiculturalism, that it's too touchy-feely, a pox on them. I think they've learned their lesson. We have to do more to teach habits of tolerance, knowledge, and awareness of other cultures."

But the top prize here goes to *The Color Purple*'s Alice Walker, who wrote in the *Village Voice* that America should respond not with force but by lovingly lecturing Osama bin Laden. "What would happen to his cool armor if he could be reminded of all the good, nonviolent things he has done?" (Are there any good, nonviolent things he's done?) "I firmly believe," Walker concluded, "the only punishment that works is love." We had never before heard love described as a punishment, but about this kind of love she may well be right.

MICHAEL MOORE: The final category—using the occasion to indulge old political grievances—has innumerable contenders on both the left and the right. But mention should be made of the syndicated cartoonist Ted Rall, who wrote, "Now we know why 7,000 people sacrificed their lives—so that we'd all forget how Bush stole a presidential election."

First place, however, belongs to filmmaker Michael Moore, director of *Roger & Me*, who wrote on his website, "If someone did this to get back at Bush, then they did so by killing thousands of people who *did not vote* for him! Boston, New York, D.C., and the planes' destination of California—these were places that voted *against* Bush! Why kill them?" After *OpinionJournal.com* publicized the posting, Moore removed it, claiming he'd been taken out of context—and replaced it with a paean to Barbara Lee, the single member of Congress to vote against giving the president war powers. She alone, Moore explained, "refused to run with the lemmings as they headed off to war." ♦

Return to Normalcy

Even after the events of Sept. 11, life goes on. Reviewing *If Nights Could Talk: A Family Memoir* for the *Los Angeles Times*, the poet Richard Howard wrote: "I must acknowledge an interest, or rather a dismay, in discussing this 'family memoir,' for from experience and observation I have come to regard the American nuclear family in the last 50 years as the enemy of individual determination, of personal autonomy—in short, as a disease." The *Los Angeles Times* is what used to be called a family newspaper.

Meanwhile, the publicity department at Prometheus Books has responded to the attacks with a list of helpful books it publishes. The press release's headline reads: "Books Offer Examination of Terrorism, Grief, Jihad, Air Safety, Evil, and Nostradamus." *Nostradamus*? Well, you see, in book three of his prophesies . . .

Finally, from Vienna: This month, the Kosmos Frauenraum will present five American women composers' works for trombone and computer. It's all part of the "Wired Goddess Project," an international effort to address the lack of feminist trombone-and-computer music. The day before, Abbie Conant—the female first trombonist of the Munich Philharmonic—will lecture on "Symphony Orchestras and Artist-Prophets: Cultural Isomorphism and the Allocation of Power in Music," in which she promises to "document the gender and racial ideologies of the Vienna Philharmonic and analyze them from a historical perspective." We regret our inability to attend. ♦

Books in Brief

***Smiling through the Cultural Catastrophe* by Jeffrey Hart (Yale University Press, 288 pp., $26.95)** Who's smiling through the cultural catastrophe? Dartmouth's Jeffrey Hart for one, and the great ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and modern writers along with him, he says. Hart cheerily explains the reasons the West's intellectual landmarks can be suppressed, ignored, subjected to racial, class, and gender distortions, and yet manage to reassert themselves again. Achilles and Moses? Secular and religious bronze-age heroes who set imperishable standards. Plato and the Prophets? Perennial sources of social criticism. Socrates and Jesus? Intellectual and spiritual martyrs who beckon to anyone in any age. Hart energetically pursues central Western insights through Paul, Augustine, Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, Voltaire, Dostoyevsky, and Fitzgerald, providing a dazzling cultural commentary along the way. Abandon all hopelessness ye who enter here.

—Robert Royal

***Against All Hope: A Memoir of Life in Castro's Gulag* by Armando Valladares (Encounter, 260 pp., $16.95)** Armando Valladares's account of his life in Castro's Cuba as a political prisoner and dissident author, now republished after 17 years, is a secret history of modern times. While the dominant intellectual elites in the West continue to treat Castro indulgently as a socialist experimenter and entertaining critic of American capitalism, the testimony of Cubans like Valladares presents the horrifying reality. In contrast to the regime's humanist rhetoric, Valladares lets us see a merciless police dictatorship that seeks brutal revenge on any who dare not to conform. Cuba has existed outside rational history for more than forty years. Once Castro's tyranny falls, Valladares's work will be recognized as the classic of democratic faith that it is.

—Stephen Schwartz

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Not a Parody

"The Hillary Perspective"
by Nicholas Lemann
The New Yorker, Oct. 8, 2001

"We talked about possible responses to the attack," Lemann writes, "and then I asked her how she thought people would react to knowing that they are on the receiving end of a murderous anger." "Oh, I am well aware that it is out there," Sen. Clinton responded:

> "One of the most difficult experiences that I personally had in the White House was during the health-care debate, being the object of extraordinary rage. I remember being in Seattle. I was there to make a speech about health care. This was probably August of '94. Radio talk-show hosts had urged their listeners to come out and yell and scream and carry on and prevent people from hearing me speak. There were threats that were coming in, and certain people didn't want me to speak, and they started taking weapons off people, and arresting people. I've had firsthand looks at this unreasoning anger and hatred that is focussed on an individual you don't know, a cause that you despise—whatever motivates people."

the weekly Standard
October 15, 2001

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Putin's Moment of Truth

Michael McFaul is the Peter and Helen Bing Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution and an assistant professor of political science at Stanford University.

On September 11, 2001, Russian president Vladimir Putin was the first world leader to speak with President Bush. He offered his unwavering support to combat our common enemy, terrorism. That same day, I received dozens of calls and e-mails from friends in Russia expressing support for my country. This outpouring of support from Russia has convinced me that Russians and Americans share common values and have the potential to be part of one international community. What unites us is much more important than what divides us. Polls that I conducted with Harvard professor Timothy Colton last year provide hard data to support my emotional, unscientific reading of Russian attitudes toward the dreadful September day. Our surveys show that two-thirds of the Russian people embrace democratic ideals and practices.

Since that first phone call to Bush, however, Putin has allowed some of his advisers to add qualifications to Russia's support. His senior military and intelligence officers are pushing him to retreat to old ways of thinking regarding international politics, to worry more about NATO troops in Central Asia and old Soviet allies, Iraq and Iran. At the time of this writing, Putin had not committed unequivocally to the new U.S. military and diplomatic campaign against radical Islamic fundamentalism.

Ironically, the recent attack against the United States offers Russia an opportunity to join the West. The disputes that divided Russia and the United States throughout the latter half of the 1990s seem trivial compared to our new common interests. If Putin were to cooperate with the United States and its allies in this campaign against terrorism, the lingering legacies of the cold war might be overcome. If Putin continues to listen to those espousing Soviet geostrategic thinking, Russia may miss its chance for Western integration.

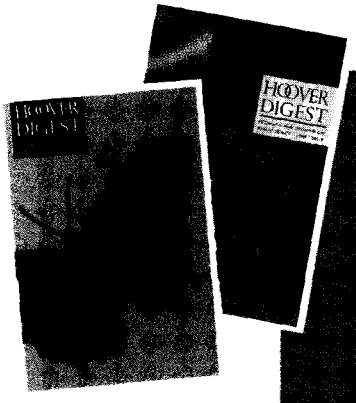
President Bush can help Putin make the right decision by reminding Putin of a bitter fact—Russia cannot become a full member of the Western community of states unless Russia consolidates democracy at home. As the Bush team embarks on a protracted conflict with a worldwide foe, it will be tempted to sidestep hard questions of those who go along. This would be a mistake. Russia will never be an all-around partner of the United States and the West unless democratization proceeds. Backsliding could pit this strategically vital country against the United States once again.

To encourage democratization in Russia and cooperation in our battle against terrorism, Bush has to offer a positive agenda. In affirming the importance of democratic consolidation as a prerequisite for integration, Bush can lead other countries into making integration an attainable goal by pushing for Russian membership in the World Trade Organization, lowering trade barriers to Russian imports, and relaxing travel restrictions. More boldly, Bush could outline the concrete stages for future Russian membership in NATO.

The recent attack on American soil has focused our mind on the real threats to our security—Russia need not be one of them. On the contrary, these tragic events underscore just how close our countries have become. The Russian people already have made this realization. They, like us, are waiting for the Russian government to do the same.

— Michael McFaul

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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